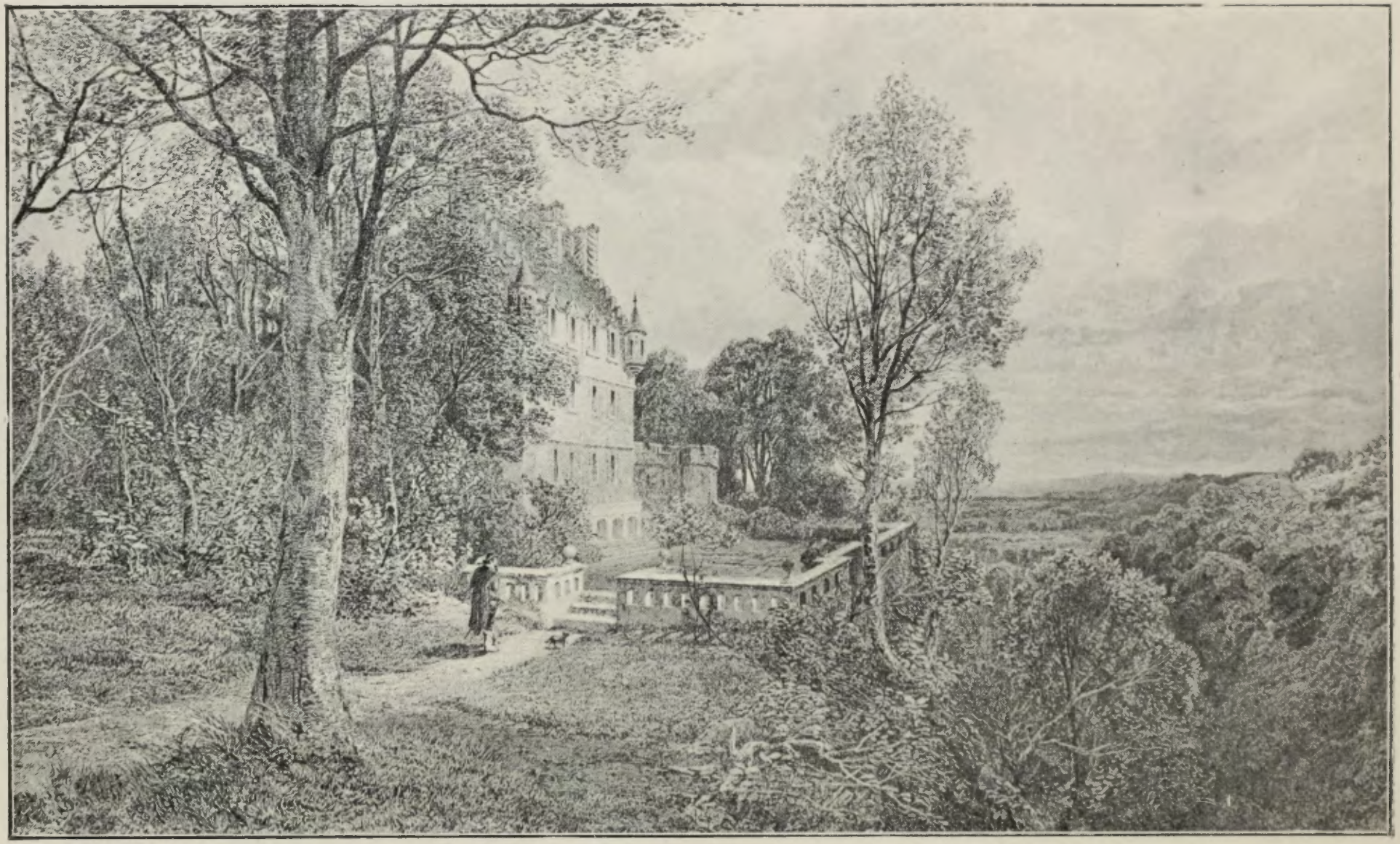

Ravenswood Castle.

THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR

AND

THE SURGEON'S DAUGHTER.

BY

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

NEW YORK
THE WAVERLEY BOOK COMPANY
1898

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TALES OF MY LANDLORD

Third Series

Hear, Land o' Cakes and brither Scots,
Frae Maidenkirk to Johnny Groat's,
If there's a hole in a' your coats,
I rede ye tent it;
A chiel's amang you takin' notes,
An' faith he'll prent it!

BURNS.

Ahora bien, dixo il Cura, traedme, senor huésped, aquesos libros, que los quiero ver. Que me place, respondió el, y entrando en su aposento, sacó del una maletilla vieja cerrada con una cadenilla, y abriéndola halló en ella tres libros grandes y unos papeles de muy buena letra escritos de mano.—DON QUIXOTE, Parte I., Capitulo xxxii.

It is mighty well, said the priest; pray, landlord, bring me those books, for I have a mind to see them. With all my heart, answered the host; and going to his chamber, he brought out a little old cloke-bag, with a padlock and chain to it, and opening it, he took out three large volumes, and some manuscript papers written in a fine character.—JARVIS'S *Translation.*

INTRODUCTION

TO

THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR

THE Author, on a former occasion,* declined giving the real source from which he drew the tragic subject of this history, because, though occurring at a distant period, it might possibly be unpleasing to the feelings of the descendants of the parties.† But as he finds an account of the circumstances given in the Notes to Law's *Memorials*,‡ by his ingenious friend, Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, Esq., and also indicated in his reprint of the Rev. Mr. Symson's poems appended to the *Large Description of Galloway*, as the original of the *Bride of Lammermoor*, the Author feels himself now at liberty to tell the tale as he had it from connections of his own, who lived very near the period, and were closely related to the family of the bride.

It is well known that the family of Dalrymple, which has produced, within the space of two centuries, as many men of talent, civil and military, and of literary, political, and professional eminence, as any house in Scotland, first rose into distinction in the person of James Dalrymple, one of the most eminent lawyers that ever lived, though the labors of his powerful mind were unhappily exercised on a subject so limited as Scottish jurisprudence, on which he has composed an admirable work.

He married Margaret, daughter to Ross of Balneel, with whom he obtained a considerable estate. She was an able, politic, and high-minded woman, so successful in what she

* See Introduction to the *Chronicles of the Canongate.*
† See The Family of Stair. Note 1.
‡ Law's *Memorials*, p. 226.

undertook, that the vulgar, no way partial to her husband or her family, imputed her success to necromancy. According to the popular belief, this Dame Margaret purchased the temporal prosperity of her family from the Master whom she served under a singular condition, which is thus narrated by the historian of her grandson, the great Earl of Stair: "She lived to a great age, and at her death desired that she might not be put under ground, but that her coffin should stand upright on one end of it, promising that while she remained in that situation the Dalrymples should continue to flourish. What was the old lady's motive for the request, or whether she really made such a promise, I shall not take upon me to determine; but it's certain her coffin stands upright in the aisle of the church of Kirklistown, the burial-place belonging to the family."* The talents of this accomplished race were sufficient to have accounted for the dignities which many members of the family attained, without any supernatural assistance. But their extraordinary prosperity was attended by some equally singular family misfortunes, of which that which befell their eldest daughter was at once unaccountable and melancholy.

Miss Janet Dalrymple, daughter of the first Lord Stair and Dame Margaret Ross, had engaged herself without the knowledge of her parents to the Lord Rutherford, who was not acceptable to them either on account of his political principles or his want of fortune. The young couple broke a piece of gold together, and pledged their troth in the most solemn manner; and it is said the young lady imprecated dreadful evils on herself should she break her plighted faith. Shortly after, a suitor who was favored by Lord Stair, and still more so by his lady, paid his addresses to Miss Dalrymple. The young lady refused the proposal, and being pressed on the subject, confessed her secret engagement. Lady Stair, a woman accustomed to universal submission, for even her husband did not dare to contradict her, treated this objection as a trifle, and insisted upon her daughter yielding her consent to marry the new suitor, David Dunbar, son and heir to David Dunbar of Baldoon, in Wigtonshire. The first lover, a man of very high spirit, then interfered by letter, and insisted on the right he had acquired by his troth plighted with the young lady. Lady Stair sent him for answer, that her daughter, sensible of her undutiful behavior in entering into a contract unsanctioned by her parents, had retracted

* *Memoirs of John Earl of Stair*, by an Impartial Hand. London, printed for C. Corbett, p. 8.

her unlawful vow, and now refused to fulfil her engagement with him.

The lover, in return, declined positively to receive such an answer from any one but his mistress in person; and as she had to deal with a man who was both of a most determined character and of too high condition to be trifled with, Lady Stair was obliged to consent to an interview between Lord Rutherford and her daughter. But she took care to be present in person, and argued the point with the disappointed and incensed lover with pertinacity equal to his own. She particularly insisted on the Levitical law, which declares that a woman shall be free of a vow which her parents dissent from. This is the passage of Scripture she founded on:

"If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth.

"If a woman also vow a vow unto the Lord, and bind herself by a bond, being in her father's house in her youth;

"And her father hear her vow, and her bond wherewith she hath bound her soul, and her father shall hold his peace at her: then all her vows shall stand, and every bond wherewith she hath bound her soul shall stand.

"But if her father disallow her in the day that he heareth; not any of her vows, or of her bonds wherewith she hath bound her soul, shall stand: and the Lord shall forgive her, because her father disallowed her."—Numbers xxx. 2–5.

While the mother insisted on these topics, the lover in vain conjured the daughter to declare her own opinion and feelings. She remained totally overwhelmed, as it seemed—mute, pale, and motionless as a statue. Only at her mother's command, sternly uttered, she summoned strength enough to restore to her plighted suitor the piece of broken gold which was the emblem of her troth. On this he burst forth into a tremendous passion, took leave of the mother with maledictions, and as he left the apartment, turned back to say to his weak, if not fickle, mistress, "For you, madam, you will be a world's wonder;" a phrase by which some remarkable degree of calamity is usually implied. He went abroad, and returned not again. If the last Lord Rutherford was the unfortunate party, he must have been the third who bore that title, and who died in 1685.

The marriage betwixt Janet Dalrymple and David Dunbar of Baldoon now went forward, the bride showing no repugnance, but being absolutely passive in everything her mother commanded or advised. On the day of the marriage, which,

as was then usual, was celebrated by a great assemblage of friends and relations, she was the same—sad, silent, and resigned, as it seemed, to her destiny. A lady, very nearly connected with the family, told the Author that she had conversed on the subject with one of the brothers of the bride, a mere lad at the time, who had ridden before his sister to church. He said her hand, which lay on his as she held her arm round his waist, was as cold and damp as marble. But, full of his new dress and the part he acted in the procession, the circumstance, which he long afterwards remembered with bitter sorrow and compunction, made no impression on him at the time.

The bridal feast was followed by dancing. The bride and bridegroom retired as usual, when of a sudden the most wild and piercing cries were heard from the nuptial chamber. It was then the custom, to prevent any coarse pleasantry which old times perhaps admitted, that the key of the nuptial chamber should be intrusted to the bridesman. He was called upon, but refused at first to give it up, till the shrieks became so hideous that he was compelled to hasten with others to learn the cause. On opening the door, they found the bridegroom lying across the threshold, dreadfully wounded, and streaming with blood. The bride was then sought for. She was found in the corner of the large chimney, having no covering save her shift, and that dabbled in gore. There she sat grinning at them, mopping and mowing, as I heard the expression used; in a word, absolutely insane. The only words she spoke were, "Tak up your bonny bridegroom." She survived this horrible scene little more than a fortnight, having been married on the 24th of August, and dying on the 12th of September, 1669.

The unfortunate Baldoon recovered from his wounds, but sternly prohibited all inquiries respecting the manner in which he had received them. "If a lady," he said, "asked him any question upon the subject, he would neither answer her nor speak to her again while he lived; if a gentleman, he would consider it as a mortal affront, and demand satisfaction as having received such." He did not very long survive the dreadful catastrophe, having met with a fatal injury by a fall from his horse, as he rode between Leith and Holyrood House, of which he died the next day, 28th March, 1682. Thus a few years removed all the principal actors in this frightful tragedy.

Various reports went abroad on this mysterious affair, many of them very inaccurate, though they could hardly be

said to be exaggerated.* It was difficult at that time to become acquainted with the history of a Scottish family above the lower rank; and strange things sometimes took place there, into which even the law did not scrupulously inquire.

The credulous Mr. Law says, generally, that the Lord President Stair had a daughter, who, "being married, the night she was bride in, was taken from her bridegroom and harled through the house [by spirits, we are given to understand], and afterward died. Another daughter," he says, "was supposed to be possessed with an evil spirit."

My friend, Mr. Sharpe, gives another edition of the tale. According to his information, it was the bridegroom who wounded the bride. The marriage, according to this account, had been against her mother's inclination, who had given her consent in these ominous words: "Weel, you may marry him, but sair shall you repent it."

I find still another account darkly insinuated in some highly scurrilous and abusive verses, of which I have an original copy. They are docketed as being written "Upon the late Viscount Stair and his family, by Sir William Hamilton of Whitelaw. The marginals by William Dunlop, writer in Edinburgh, a son of the Laird of Househill, and nephew to the said Sir William Hamilton." There was a bitter and personal quarrel and rivalry betwixt the author of this libel, a name which it richly deserves, and Lord President Stair; and the lampoon, which is written with much more malice than art, bears the following motto:

> **Stair's neck, mind, wife, sons, grandson, and the rest,**
> **Are wry, false, witch, pests, parricide, possessed.**

This malignant satirist, who calls up all the misfortunes of the family, does not forget the fatal bridal of Baldoon. He seems, though his verses are as obscure as unpoetical, to intimate that the violence done to the bridegroom was by the intervention of the foul fiend, to whom the young lady had resigned herself, in case she should break her contract with her first lover. His hypothesis is inconsistent with the account given in the note upon Law's *Memorials*, but easily reconcilable to the family tradition.

* There appeared in the *Edinburgh Evening Post* of Oct. 10, 1840 (and afterwards in the *Lives of the Lindsays*, p. 459), a letter dated September 5th, 1823, addressed by Sir C. Horne Dalrymple Elphinstone, Bart., to the late Sir James Stewart Denham of Joltness, Bart., both descendants of Lord President Stair, from which it appears that, according to the traditional creed of the Dalrymple family, the bride's unhappy lover, Lord Rutherford, had found means to be secreted in the nuptial chamber, and that the wound of the bridegroom, Sir David Dunbar of Baldoon, was inflicted by Rutherford's hand.—J. G. LOCKHART.

In all Stair's offspring we no difference know,
They do the females as the males bestow;
So he of one of his daughters' marriage gave the ward,
Like a true vassal, to Glenluce's Laird;
He knew what she did to her master plight,
If she her faith to Rutherfurd should slight,
Which, like his own, for greed he broke outright.
Nick did Baldoon's posterior right deride,
And, as first substitute, did seize the bride;
Whate'er he to his mistress did or said,
He threw the bridegroom from the nuptial bed,
Into the chimney did so his rival maul,
His bruised bones ne'er were cured but by the fall. *

One of the marginal notes ascribed to William Dunlop applies to the above lines. "She had betrothed herself to Lord Rutherfoord under horrid imprecations, and afterwards married Baldoon, his nevoy, and her mother was the cause of her breach of faith."

The same tragedy is alluded to in the following couplet and note:

What train of curses that base brood pursues,
When the young nephew weds old uncle's spouse.

The note on the word "uncle" explains it as meaning "Rutherfoord, who should have married the Lady Baldoon, was Baldoon's uncle." The poetry of this satire on Lord Stair and his family was, as already noticed, written by Sir William Hamilton of Whitelaw, a rival of Lord Stair for the situation of President of the Court of Session; a person much inferior to that great lawyer in talents, and equally ill-treated by the calumny or just satire of his contemporaries as an unjust and partial judge. Some of the notes are by that curious and laborious antiquary, Robert Milne, who, as a virulent Jacobite, willingly lent a hand to blacken the family of Stair.†

Another poet of the period, with a very different purpose, has left an elegy, in which he darkly hints at and bemoans the fate of the ill-starred young person, whose very uncommon calamity Whitelaw, Dunlop, and Milne thought a fitting subject for buffoonery and ribaldry. This bard of milder mood was Andrew Symson, before the Revolution minister of Kirkinner, in Galloway, and after his expulsion

* The fall from his horse, by which he was killed.

† I have compared the satire, which occurs in the first volume of the curious little collection called a *Book of Scottish Pasquils*, 1827, with that which has a more full text and more extended notes, and which is in my own possession, by gift of Thomas Thomson, Esq., Register-Depute. In the *Book of Pasquils*, p. 72, is a most abusive epitaph on Sir William Hamilton of Whitelaw.

as an Episcopalian following the humble occupation of a printer in Edinburgh. He furnished the family of Baldoon, with which he appears to have been intimate, with an elegy on the tragic event in their family. In this piece he treats the mournful occasion of the bride's death with mysterious solemnity.

The verses bear this title, "On the unexpected death of the virtuous Lady Mrs. Janet Dalrymple, Lady Baldoon, younger," and afford us the precise dates of the catastrophe, which could not otherwise have been easily ascertained. "Nupta August 12. Domum Ducta August 24. Obiit September 12. Sepult. September 30, 1669." The form of the elegy is a dialogue betwixt a passenger and a domestic servant. The first, recollecting that he had passed that way lately, and seen all around enlivened by the appearances of mirth and festivity, is desirous to know what had changed so gay a scene into mourning. We preserve the reply of the servant as a specimen of Mr. Symson's verses, which are not of the first quality:

Sir, 'tis truth you've told.
We did enjoy great mirth; but now, ah me!
Our joyful song's turn'd to an elegie.
A virtuous lady, not long since a bride,
Was to a hopeful plant by marriage tied,
And brought home hither. We did all rejoice,
Even for her sake. But presently our voice
Was turn'd to mourning for that little time
That she'd enjoy: she waned in her prime,
For Atropus, with her impartial knife,
Soon cut her thread, and therewithal her life;
And for the time we may it well remember,
It being in unfortunate September;
. . . . .
Where we must leave her till the resurrection,
'Tis then the Saints enjoy their full perfection.*

Mr. Symson also poured forth his elegiac strains upon the fate of the widowed bridegroom, on which subject, after a long and querulous effusion, the poet arrives at the sound conclusion, that if Baldoon had walked on foot, which it seems was his general custom, he would have escaped perishing by a fall from horseback. As the work in which it occurs is so

* This elegy is reprinted in the appendix to a topographical work by the same author, entitled *A Large Description of Galloway*, by Andrew Symson, Minister of Kirkinner, 8vo, Tait, Edinburgh, 1823. The reverend gentleman's elegies are extremely rare, nor did the Author ever see a copy but his own, which is bound up with the *Tripatriarchicon*, a religious poem from the Biblical History, by the same author.

scarce as almost to be unique, and as it gives us the most full account of one of the actors in this tragic tale which we have rehearsed, we will, at the risk of being tedious, insert some short specimens of Mr. Symson's composition. It is entitled—

"A Funeral Elegie, occasioned by the sad and much lamented death of that worthily respected, and very much accomplished gentleman, David Dunbar, younger, of Baldoon, only son and apparent heir to the right worshipful Sir David Dunbar of Baldoon, Knight Baronet. He departed this life on March 28, 1682, having received a bruise by a fall, as he was riding the day preceding betwixt Leith and Holyrood House; and was honorably interred in the Abbey Church of Holyrood House, on April 4, 1682."

Men might, and very justly too, conclude
Me guilty of the worst ingratitude,
Should I be silent, or should I forbear
At this sad accident to shed a tear;
A tear! said I? ah! that's a petit thing,
A very lean, slight, slender offering,
Too mean, I'm sure, for me, wherewith t'attend
The unexpected funeral of my friend:
A glass of briny tears charged up to th' brim,
Would be too few for me to shed for him.

The poet proceeds to state his intimacy with the deceased, and the constancy of the young man's attendance on public worship, which was regular, and had such effect upon two or three others that were influenced by his example,

So that my Muse 'gainst Priscian avers,
He, only he, *were* my parishioners;
Yea, and my only hearers.

He then describes the deceased in person and manners, from which it appears that more accomplishments were expected in the composition of a fine gentleman in ancient than modern times:

His body, though not very large or tall,
Was sprightly, active, yea and strong withal.
His constitution was, if right I've guess'd,
Blood mixt with choler, said to be the best.
In's gesture, converse, speech, discourse, attire,
He practis'd that which wise men still admire,
Commend, and recommend. What's that? you'll say.
'Tis this: he ever choos'd the middle way
'Twixt both th' extremes. Amost in ev'ry thing
He did the like, 'tis worth our noticing:

Sparing, yet not a niggard ; liberal,
And yet not lavish or a prodigal,
As knowing when to spend and when to spare ;
And that's a lesson which not many are
Acquainted with. He bashful was, yet daring
When he saw cause, and yet therein but sparing ;
Familiar, yet not common, for he knew
To condescend, and keep his distance too.
He us'd, and that most commonly, to go
On foot ; I wish that he had still done so.
Th' affairs of court were unto him well known ;
And yet meanwhile he slighted not his own.
He knew full well how to behave at court,
And yet but seldom did thereto resort ;
But lov'd the country life, choos'd to inure
Himself to past'rage and agriculture ;
Proving, improving, ditching, trenching, draining,
Viewing, reviewing, and by those means gaining ;
Planting, transplanting, levelling, erecting
Walls, chambers, houses, terraces ; projecting
Now this, now that device, this draught, that measure,
That might advance his profit with his pleasure.
Quick in his bargains, honest in commerce,
Just in his dealings, being much averse
From quirks of law, still ready to refer
His cause t' an honest country arbiter.
He was acquainted with cosmography,
Arithmetic, and modern history ;
With architecture and such arts as these,
Which I may call specifick sciences
Fit for a gentleman ; and surely he
That knows them not, at least in some degree,
May brook the title, but he wants the thing,
Is but a shadow scarce worth noticing.
He learned the French, be't spoken to his praise,
In very little more than fourty days.

Then comes the full burst of woe, in which, instead of saying much himself, the poet informs us what the ancients would have said on such an occasion :

A heathen poet, at the news, no doubt,
Would have exclaimed, and furiously cry'd out
Against the fates, the destinies and starrs,
What ! this the effect of planetarie warrs !
We might have seen him rage and rave, yea worse,
'Tis very like we might have heard him curse
The year, the month, the day, the hour, the place,
The company, the wager, and the race ;
Decry all recreations, with the names
Of Isthmian, Pythian, and Olympick games ;

Exclaim against them all both old and new,
Both the Nemæan and the Lethæan too:
Adjudge all persons, under highest pain,
Always to walk on foot, and then again
Order all horses to be hough'd, that we
Might never more the like adventure see.

Supposing our readers have had enough of Mr. Symson's woe, and finding nothing more in his poem worthy of transcription, we return to the tragic story.

It is needless to point out to the intelligent reader that the witchcraft of the mother consisted only in the ascendency of a powerful mind over a weak and melancholy one, and that the harshness with which she exercised her superiority in a case of delicacy had driven her daughter first to despair, then to frenzy. Accordingly, the Author has endeavored to explain the tragic tale on this principle. Whatever resemblance Lady Ashton may be supposed to possess to the celebrated Dame Margaret Ross, the reader must not suppose that there was any idea of tracing the portrait of the first Lord Viscount Stair in the tricky and mean-spirited Sir William Ashton. Lord Stair, whatever might be his moral qualities, was certainly one of the first statesmen and lawyers of his age.

The imaginary castle of Wolf's Crag has been identified by some lover of locality with that of Fast Castle. The Author is not competent to judge of the resemblance betwixt the real and imaginary scene, having never seen Fast Castle except from the sea. But fortalices of this description are found occupying, like ospreys' nests, projecting rocks, or promontories, in many parts of the eastern coast of Scotland, and the position of Fast Castle seems certainly to resemble that of Wolf's Crag as much as any other, while its vicinity to the mountain ridge of Lammermoor renders the assimilation a probable one.

We have only to add, that the death of the unfortunate bridegroom by a fall from horseback has been in the novel transferred to the no less unfortunate lover.*

* See the account of how this novel was composed in Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, vol. vi., p. 66 *et seq.*, ed. 1862 (*Laing*).

THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR

CHAPTER I

By cauk and keel to win your bread,
Wi' whigmaleeries for them wha need,
Whilk is a gentle trade indeed
To carry the gaberlunzie on.
Old Song.

FEW have been in my secret while I was compiling these narratives, nor is it probable that they will ever become public during the life of their author. Even were that event to happen, I am not ambitious of the honored distinction, *digito monstrari.* I confess that, were it safe to cherish such dreams at all, I should more enjoy the thought of remaining behind the curtain unseen, like the ingenious manager of Punch and his wife Joan, and enjoying the astonishment and conjectures of my audience. Then might I, perchance, hear the productions of the obscure Peter Pattieson praised by the judicious and admired by the feeling, engrossing the young and attracting even the old; while the critic traced their fame up to some name of literary celebrity, and the question when, and by whom, these tales were written filled up the pause of conversation in a hundred circles and coteries. This I may never enjoy during my lifetime; but farther than this, I am certain, my vanity should never induce me to aspire.

I am too stubborn in habits, and too little polished in manners, to envy or aspire to the honors assigned to my literary contemporaries. I could not think a whit more highly of myself were I even found worthy to "come in place as a lion" for a winter in the great metropolis. I could not rise, turn round, and show all my honors, from the shaggy mane to the tufted tail, "roar you an 'twere any nightingale," and so lie down again like a well-behaved beast of show, and all at the cheap and easy rate of a cup of coffee and a slice of bread and butter as thin as a wafer. And I could ill stomach

the fulsome flattery with which the lady of the evening indulges her show-monsters on such occasions, as she crams her parrots with sugar-plums, in order to make them talk before company. I cannot be tempted to "come aloft" for these marks of distinction, and, like imprisoned Sampson, I would rather remain—if such must be the alternative—all my life in the mill-house, grinding for my very bread, than be brought forth to make sport for the Philistine lords and ladies. This proceeds from no dislike, real or affected, to the aristocracy of these realms. But they have their place, and I have mine; and, like the iron and earthen vessels in the old fable, we can scarce come into collision without my being the sufferer in every sense. It may be otherwise with the sheets which I am now writing. These may be opened and laid aside at pleasure; by amusing themselves with the perusal, the great will excite no false hopes; by neglecting or condemning them, they will inflict no pain; and how seldom can they converse with those whose minds have toiled for their delight without doing either the one or the other.

In the better and wiser tone of feeling which Ovid only expresses in one line to retract in that which follows, I can address these quires—

Parve, nec invideo, sine me, liber, ibis in urbem.

Nor do I join the regret of the illustrious exile, that he himself could not in person accompany the volume, which he sent forth to the mart of literature, pleasure, and luxury. Were there not a hundred similar instances on record, the fate of my poor friend and school-fellow, Dick Tinto, would be sufficient to warn me against seeking happiness in the celebrity which attaches itself to a successful cultivator of the fine arts.

Dick Tinto, when he wrote himself artist, was wont to derive his origin from the ancient family of Tinto, of that ilk, in Lanarkshire, and occasionally hinted that he had somewhat derogated from his gentle blood in using the pencil for his principal means of support. But if Dick's pedigree was correct, some of his ancestors must have suffered a more heavy declension, since the good man his father executed the necessary, and, I trust, the honest, but certainly not very distinguished, employment of tailor in ordinary to the village of Langdirdum in the west. Under his humble roof was Richard born, and to his father's humble trade was Richard, greatly contrary to his inclination, early indentured. Old Mr. Tinto had, however, no reason to congratulate himself upon having

compelled the youthful genius of his son to forsake its natural bent. He fared like the schoolboy who attempts to stop with his finger the spout of a water cistern, while the stream, exasperated at this compression, escapes by a thousand uncalculated spirits, and wets him all over for his pains. Even so fared the senior Tinto, when his hopeful apprentice not only exhausted all the chalk in making sketches upon the shop-board, but even executed several caricatures of his father's best customers, who began loudly to murmur, that it was too hard to have their persons deformed by the vestments of the father, and to be at the same time turned into ridicule by the pencil of the son. This led to discredit and loss of practice, until the old tailor, yielding to destiny and to the entreaties of his son, permitted him to attempt his fortune in a line for which he was better qualified.

There was about this time, in the village of Langdirdum, a peripatetic brother of the brush, who exercised his vocation *sub Jove frigido*, the object of admiration to all the boys of the village, but especially to Dick Tinto. The age had not yet adopted, among other unworthy retrenchments, that illiberal measure of economy which, supplying by written characters the lack of symbolical representation, closes one open and easily accessible avenue of instruction and emolument against the students of the fine arts. It was not yet permitted to write upon the plastered doorway of an alehouse, or the suspended sign of an inn, "The Old Magpie," or "The Saracen's Head," substituting that cold description for the lively effigies of the plumed chatterer, or the turbaned frown of the terrific soldan. That early and more simple age considered alike the necessities of all ranks, and depicted the symbols of good cheer so as to be obvious to all capacities; well judging that a man who could not read a syllable might nevertheless love a pot of good ale as well as his better-educated neighbors, or even as the parson himself. Acting upon this liberal principle, publicans as yet hung forth the painted emblems of their calling, and sign-painters, if they seldom feasted, did not at least absolutely starve.

To a worthy of this decayed profession, as we have already intimated, Dick Tinto became an assistant; and thus, as is not unusual among heaven-born geniuses in this department of the fine arts, began to paint before he had any notion of drawing.

His talent for observing nature soon induced him to rectify the errors, and soar above the instructions, of his teacher. He particularly shone in painting horses, that being

a favorite sign in the Scottish villages; and, in tracing his progress, it is beautiful to observe how by degrees he learned to shorten the backs and prolong the legs of these noble animals, until they came to look less like crocodiles, and more like nags. Detraction, which always pursues merit with strides proportioned to its advancement, has indeed alleged that Dick once upon a time painted a horse with five legs instead of four. I might have rested his defence upon the license allowed to that branch of his profession, which, as it permits all sorts of singular and irregular combinations, may be allowed to extend itself so far as to bestow a limb supernumerary on a favorite subject. But the cause of a deceased friend is sacred; and I disdain to bottom it so superficially. I have visited the sign in question, which yet swings exalted in the village of Langdirdum; and I am ready to depone upon oath that what has been idly mistaken or misrepresented as being the fifth leg of the horse, is, in fact, the tail of that quadruped, and, considered with reference to the posture in which he is delineated, forms a circumstance introduced and managed with great and successful, though daring, art. The nag being represented in a rampant or rearing posture, the tail, which is prolonged till it touches the ground, appears to form a *point d'appui,* and gives the firmness of a tripod to the figure, without which it would be difficult to conceive, placed as the feet are, how the courser could maintain his ground without tumbling backwards. This bold conception has fortunately fallen into the custody of one by whom it is duly valued; for, when Dick, in his more advanced state of proficiency, became dubious of the propriety of so daring a deviation from the established rules of art, and was desirous to execute a picture of the publican himself in exchange for this juvenile production, the courteous offer was declined by his judicious employer, who had observed, it seems, that when his ale failed to do its duty in conciliating his guests, one glance at his sign was sure to put them in good humor.

It would be foreign to my present purpose to trace the steps by which Dick Tinto improved his touch, and corrected, by the rules of art, the luxuriance of a fervid imagination. The scales fell from his eyes on viewing the sketches of a contemporary, the Scottish Teniers, as Wilkie has been deservedly styled. He threw down the brush, took up the crayons, and, amid hunger and toil, and suspense and uncertainty, pursued the path of his profession under better auspices than those of his original master. Still the first rude emanations

of his genius, like the nursery rhymes of Pope, could these be recovered, will be dear to the companions of Dick Tinto's youth. There is a tankard and gridiron painted over the door of an obscure change-house in the Back Wynd of Gandercleugh—— But I feel I must tear myself from the subject, or dwell on it too long.

Amid his wants and struggles, Dick Tinto had recourse, like his brethren, to levying that tax upon the vanity of mankind which he could not extract from their taste and liberality —in a word, he painted portraits. It was in this more advanced state of proficiency, when Dick had soared above his original line of business, and highly disdained any allusion to it, that, after having been estranged for several years, we again met in the village of Gandercleugh, I holding my present situation, and Dick painting copies of the human face divine at a guinea per head. This was a small premium, yet, in the first burst of business, it more than sufficed for all Dick's moderate wants; so that he occupied an apartment at the Wallace Inn, cracked his jest with impunity even upon mine host himself, and lived in respect and observance with the chambermaid, hostler, and waiter.

Those halcyon days were too serene to last long. When his honor the Laird of Gandercleugh, with his wife and three daughters, the minister, the gauger, mine esteemed patron Mr. Jedediah Cleishbotham, and some round dozen of the feuars and farmers, had been consigned to immortality by Tinto's brush, custom began to slacken, and it was impossible to wring more than crowns and half-crowns from the hard hands of the peasants whose ambition led them to Dick's painting-room.

Still, though the horizon was overclouded, no storm for some time ensued. Mine host had Christian faith with a lodger who had been a good paymaster as long as he had the means. And from a portrait of our landlord himself, grouped with his wife and daughters, in the style of Rubens, which suddenly appeared in the best parlor, it was evident that Dick had found some mode of bartering art for the necessaries of life.

Nothing, however, is more precarious than resources of this nature. It was observed that Dick became in his turn the whetstone of mine host's wit, without venturing either at defence or retaliation; that his easel was transferred to a garret-room, in which there was scarce space for it to stand upright; and that he no longer ventured to join the weekly club, of which he had been once the life and soul. In short,

Dick Tinto's friends feared that he had acted like the animal called the sloth, which, having eaten up the last green leaf upon the tree where it has established itself, ends by tumbling down from the top, and dying of inanition. I ventured to hint this to Dick, recommended his transferring the exercise of his inestimable talent to some other sphere, and forsaking the common which he might be said to have eaten bare.

"There is an obstacle to my change of residence," said my friend, grasping my hand with a look of solemnity.

"A bill due to my landlord, I am afraid?" replied I, with heartfelt sympathy; "if any part of my slender means can assist in this emergence——"

"No, by the soul of Sir Joshua!" answered the generous youth, "I will never involve a friend in the consequences of my own misfortune. There is a mode by which I can regain my liberty; and to creep even through a common sewer is better than to remain in prison."

I did not perfectly understand what my friend meant. The muse of painting appeared to have failed him, and what other goddess he could invoke in his distress was a mystery to me. We parted, however, without farther explanation, and I did not again see him until three days after, when he summoned me to partake of the "foy" with which his landlord proposed to regale him ere his departure for Edinburgh.

I found Dick in high spirits, whistling while he buckled the small knapsack which contained his colors, brushes, palettes, and clean shirt. That he parted on the best terms with mine host was obvious from the cold beef set forth in the low parlor, flanked by two mugs of admirable brown stout; and I own my curiosity was excited concerning the means through which the face of my friend's affairs had been so suddenly improved. I did not suspect Dick of dealing with the devil, and by what earthly means he had extricated himself thus happily I was at a total loss to conjecture.

He perceived my curiosity, and took me by the hand. "My friend," he said, "fain would I conceal, even from you, the degradation to which it has been necessary to submit, in order to accomplish an honorable retreat from Gandercleugh. But what avails attempting to conceal that which must needs betray itself even by its superior excellence? All the village —all the parish—all the world—will soon discover to what poverty has reduced Richard Tinto."

A sudden thought here struck me. I had observed that our landlord wore, on that memorable morning, a pair of bran new velveteens, instead of his ancient thicksets.

"What," said I, drawing my right hand, with the forefinger and thumb pressed together, nimbly from my right haunch to my left shoulder, "you have condescended to resume the paternal arts to which you were first bred—long stitches, ha, Dick?"

He repelled this unlucky conjecture with a frown and a pshaw, indicative of indignant contempt, and leading me into another room, showed me, resting against the wall, the majestic head of Sir William Wallace, grim as when severed from the trunk by the orders of the felon Edward.

The painting was executed on boards of a substantial thickness, and the top decorated with irons, for suspending the honored effigy upon a signpost.

"There," he said, "my friend, stands the honor of Scotland, and my shame; yet not so—rather the shame of those who, instead of encouraging art in its proper sphere, reduce it to these unbecoming and unworthy extremities."

I endeavored to smooth the ruffled feelings of my misused and indignant friend. I reminded him that he ought not, like the stag in the fable, to despise the quality which had extricated him from difficulties, in which his talents, as a portrait or landscape painter, had been found unavailing. Above all, I praised the execution, as well as conception, of his painting, and reminded him that, far from feeling dishonored by so superb a specimen of his talents being exposed to the general view of the public, he ought rather to congratulate himself upon the agumentation of his celebrity to which its public exhibition must necessarily give rise.

"You are right, my friend—you are right," replied poor Dick, his eye kindling with enthusiasm; "why should I shun the name of an—an—[he hesitated for a phrase]—an out-of-doors artist? Hogarth has introduced himself in that character in one of his best engravings; Domenichino, or somebody else, in ancient times, Morland in our own, have exercised their talents in this manner. And wherefore limit to the rich and higher classes alone the delight which the exhibition of works of art is calculated to inspire into all classes? Statues are placed in the open air, why should Painting be more niggardly in displaying her masterpieces than her sister Sculpture? And yet, my friend, we must part suddenly; the carpenter is coming in an hour to put up the—the emblem; and truly, with all my philosophy, and your consolatory encouragement to boot, I would rather wish to leave Gandercleugh before that operation commences."

We partook of our genial host's parting banquet, and I

escorted Dick on his walk to Edinburgh. We parted about a mile from the village, just as we heard the distant cheer of the boys which accompanied the mounting of the new symbol of the Wallace Head. Dick Tinto mended his pace to get out of hearing, so little had either early practice or recent philosophy reconciled him to the character of a sign-painter.

In Edinburgh, Dick's talents were discovered and appreciated, and he received dinners and hints from several distinguished judges of the fine arts. But these gentlemen dispensed their criticism more willingly than their cash, and Dick thought he needed cash more than criticism. He therefore sought London, the universal mart of talent, and where, as is usual in general marts of most descriptions, much more of each commodity is exposed to sale than can ever find purchasers.

Dick, who, in serious earnest, was supposed to have considerable natural talents for his profession, and whose vain and sanguine disposition never permitted him to doubt for a moment of ultimate success, threw himself headlong into the crowd which jostled and struggled for notice and preferment. He elbowed others, and was elbowed himself; and finally, by dint of intrepidity, fought his way into some notice, painted for the prize at the Institution, had pictures at the exhibition at Somerset House, and damned the hanging committee. But poor Dick was doomed to lose the field he fought so gallantly. In the fine arts, there is scarce an alternative betwixt distinguished success and absolute failure; and as Dick's zeal and industry were unable to insure the first, he fell into the distresses which, in his condition, were the natural consequences of the latter alternative. He was for a time patronized by one or two of those judicious persons who make a virtue of being singular, and of pitching their own opinions against those of the world in matters of taste and criticism. But they soon tired of poor Tinto, and laid him down as a load, upon the principle on which a spoiled child throws away its plaything. Misery, I fear, took him up, and accompanied him to a premature grave, to which he was carried from an obscure lodging in Swallow Street, where he had been dunned by his landlady within doors, and watched by bailiffs without, until death came to his relief. A corner of the *Morning Post* noticed his death, generously adding, that his manner displayed considerable genius, though his style was rather sketchy; and referred to an advertisement, which announced that Mr. Varnish, a well-known printseller, had still on hand a very few drawings and paintings by Richard Tinto, Esquire, which those of the nobility and gentry who might wish to

complete their collections of modern art were invited to visit without delay. So ended Dick Tinto! a lamentable proof of the great truth, that in the fine arts mediocrity is not permitted, and that he who cannot ascend to the very top of the ladder will do well not to put his foot upon it at all.

The memory of Tinto is dear to me, from the recollection of the many conversations which we have had together, most of them turning upon my present task. He was delighted with my progress, and talked of an ornamented and illustrated edition, with heads, vignettes, and *culs de lampe,* all to be designed by his own patriotic and friendly pencil. He prevailed upon an old sergeant of invalids to sit to him in the character of Bothwell, the lifeguard's-man of Charles the Second, and the bellman of Gandercleugh in that of David Deans. But while he thus proposed to unite his own powers with mine for the illustration of these narratives, he mixed many a dose of salutary criticism with the panegyrics which my composition was at times so fortunate as to call forth.

"Your characters," he said, "my dear Pattieson, make too much use of the *gob box;* they *patter* too much [an elegant phraseology which Dick had learned while painting the scenes of an itinerant company of players]; there is nothing in whole pages but mere chat and dialogue."

"The ancient philosopher," said I in reply, "was wont to say, 'Speak, that I may know thee;' and how is it possible for an author to introduce his *personæ dramatis* to his readers in a more interesting and effectual manner than by the dialogue in which each is represented as supporting his own appropriate character?"

"It is a false conclusion," said Tinto; "I hate it, Peter, as I hate an unfilled can. I will grant you, indeed, that speech is a faculty of some value in the intercourse of human affairs, and I will not even insist on the doctrine of that Pythagorean toper, who was of opinion that over a bottle speaking spoiled conversation. But I will not allow that a professor of the fine arts has occasion to embody the idea of his scene in language, in order to impress upon the reader its reality and its effect. On the contrary, I will be judged by most of your readers, Peter, should these tales ever become public, whether you have not given us a page of talk for every single idea which two words might have communicated, while the posture, and manner, and incident, accurately drawn, and brought out by appropriate coloring, would have preserved all that was worthy of preservation, and saved these everlasting 'said he's' and 'said she's,' with which it has been your pleasure to encumber your pages."

I replied, "That he confounded the operations of the pencil and the pen; that the serene and silent art, as painting has been called by one of our first living poets, necessarily appealed to the eye, because it had not the organs for addressing the ear; whereas poetry, or that species of composition which approached to it, lay under the necessity of doing absolutely the reverse, and addressed itself to the ear, for the purpose of exciting that interest which it could not attain through the medium of the eye."

Dick was not a whit staggered by my argument, which he contended was founded on misrepresentation. "Description," he said, "was to the author of a romance exactly what drawing and tinting were to a painter: words were his colors, and, if properly employed, they could not fail to place the scene which he wished to conjure up as effectually before the mind's eye as the tablet or canvas presents it to the bodily organ. The same rules," he contended, "applied to both, and an exuberance of dialogue, in the former case, was a verbose and laborious mode of composition which went to confound the proper art of fictitious narrative with that of the drama, a widely different species of composition, of which dialogue was the very essence, because all, excepting the language to be made use of, was presented to the eye by the dresses, and persons, and actions of the performers upon the stage. But as nothing," said Dick, "can be more dull than a long narrative written upon the plan of a drama, so where you have approached most near to that species of composition, by indulging in prolonged scenes of mere conversation, the course of your story has become chill and constrained, and you have lost the power of arresting the attention and exciting the imagination, in which upon other occasions you may be considered as having succeeded tolerably well."

I made my bow in requital of the compliment, which was probably thrown in by way of *placebo*, and expressed myself willing at least to make one trial of a more straightforward style of composition, in which my actors should do more, and say less, than in my former attempts of this kind. Dick gave me a patronizing and approving nod, and observed that, finding me so docile, he would communicate, for the benefit of my muse, a subject which he had studied with a view to his own art.

"The story," he said, "was, by tradition, affirmed to be truth, although, as upwards of a hundred years had passed away since the events took place, some doubts upon the accuracy of all the particulars might be reasonably entertained."

When Dick Tinto had thus spoken, he rummaged his portfolio for the sketch from which he proposed one day to execute a picture of fourteen feet by eight. The sketch, which was cleverly executed, to use the appropriate phrase, represented an ancient hall, fitted up and furnished in what we now call the taste of Queen Elizabeth's age. The light, admitted from the upper part of a high casement, fell upon a female figure of exquisite beauty, who, in an attitude of speechless terror, appeared to watch the issue of a debate betwixt two other persons. The one was a young man, in the Vandyke dress common to the time of Charles I., who, with an air of indignant pride, testified by the manner in which he raised his head and extended his arm, seemed to be urging a claim of right, rather than of favor, to a lady whose age, and some resemblance in their features, pointed her out as the mother of the younger female, and who appeared to listen with a mixture of displeasure and impatience.

Tinto produced his sketch with an air of mysterious triumph, and gazed on it as a fond parent looks upon a hopeful child, while he anticipates the future figure he is to make in the world, and the height to which he will raise the honor of his family. He held it at arm's length from me—he held it closer—he placed it upon the top of a chest of drawers—closed the lower shutters of the casement, to adjust a downward and favorable light—fell back to the due distance, dragging me after him—shaded his face with his hand, as if to exclude all but the favorite object—and ended by spoiling a child's copy-book, which he rolled up so as to serve for the darkened tube of an amateur. I fancy my expressions of enthusiasm had not been in proportion to his own, for he presently exclaimed with vehemence, "Mr. Pattieson, I used to think you had an eye in your head."

I vindicated my claim to the usual allowance of visual organs.

"Yet, on my honor," said Dick, "I would swear you had been born blind, since you have failed at the first glance to discover the subject and meaning of that sketch. I do not mean to praise my own performance, I leave these arts to others; I am sensible of my deficiencies, conscious that my drawing and coloring may be improved by the time I intend to dedicate to the art. But the conception—the expression—the positions—these tell the story to every one who looks at the sketch; and if I can finish the picture without diminution of the original conception, the name of Tinto shall no more be smothered by the mists of envy and intrigue."

I replied, "That I admired the sketch exceedingly; but that to understand its full merit, I felt it absolutely necessary to be informed of the subject."

"That is the very thing I complain of," answered Tinto; "you have accustomed yourself so much to these creeping twilight details of yours, that you are become incapable of receiving that instant and vivid flash of conviction which darts on the mind from seeing the happy and expressive combinations of a single scene, and which gathers from the position, attitude, and countenance of the moment, not only the history of the past lives of the personages represented, and the nature of the business on which they are immediately engaged, but lifts even the veil of futurity, and affords a shrewd guess at their future fortunes."

"In that case," replied I, "Painting excels the ape of the renowned Gines de Passamonte, which only meddled with the past and the present; nay, she excels that very Nature who affords her subjects; for I protest to you, Dick, that were I permitted to peep into that Elizabeth-chamber, and see the persons you have sketched conversing in flesh and blood, I should not be a jot nearer guessing the nature of their business than I am at this moment while looking at your sketch. Only generally, from the languishing look of the young lady, and the care you have taken to present a very handsome leg on the part of the gentleman, I presume there is some reference to a love affair between them."

"Do you really presume to form such a bold conjecture?" said Tinto. "And the indignant earnestness with which you see the man urge his suit, the unresisting and passive despair of the younger female, the stern air of inflexible determination in the elder woman, whose looks express at once consciousness that she is acting wrong and a firm determination to persist in the course she has adopted——"

"If her looks express all this, my dear Tinto," replied I, interrupting him, "your pencil rivals the dramatic art of Mr. Puff in *The Critic*, who crammed a whole complicated sentence into the expressive shake of Lord Burleigh's head."

"My good friend, Peter," replied Tinto, "I observe you are perfectly incorrigible; however, I have compassion on your dulness, and am unwilling you should be deprived of the pleasure of understanding my picture, and of gaining, at the same time, a subject for your own pen. You must know then, last summer, while I was taking sketches on the coast of East Lothian and Berwickshire, I was seduced into the mountains of Lammermoor by the account I received of some

remains of antiquity in that district. Those with which I was most struck were the ruins of an ancient castle in which that Elizabeth-chamber, as you call it, once existed. I resided for two or three days at a farmhouse in the neighborhood, where the aged goodwife was well acquainted with the history of the castle, and the events which had taken place in it. One of these was of a nature so interesting and singular, that my attention was divided between my wish to draw the old ruins in landscape, and to represent, in a history-piece, the singular events which have taken place in it. Here are my notes of the tale," said poor Dick, handing a parcel of loose scraps, partly scratched over with his pencil, partly with his pen, where outlines of caricatures, sketches of turrets, mills, old gables, and dovecots, disputed the ground with his written memoranda.

I proceeded, however, to decipher the substance of the manuscript as well as I could, and wove it into the following Tale, in which, following in part, though not entirely, my friend Tinto's advice, I endeavored to render my narrative rather descriptive than dramatic. My favorite propensity, however, has at times overcome me, and my persons, like many others in this talking world, speak now and then a great deal more than they act.*

* See Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, vol. vi., p. 66, etc.

CHAPTER II

Well, lords, we have not got that which we have;
'Tis not enough our foes are this time fled,
Being opposites of such repairing nature.
Henry VI., **Part II.**

In the gorge of a pass or mountain glen, ascending from the fertile plains of East Lothian, there stood in former times an extensive castle, of which only the ruins are now visible. Its ancient proprietors were a race of powerful and warlike barons, who bore the same name with the castle itself, which was Ravenswood. Their line extended to a remote period of antiquity, and they had intermarried with the Douglasses, Humes, Swintons, Hays, and other families of power and distinction in the same country. Their history was frequently involved in that of Scotland itself, in whose annals their feats are recorded. The Castle of Ravenswood, occupying, and in some measure commanding, a pass betwixt Berwickshire, or the Merse, as the southeastern province of Scotland is termed, and the Lothians, was of importance both in times of foreign war and domestic discord. It was frequently besieged with ardor, and defended with obstinacy, and, of course, its owners played a conspicuous part in story. But their house had its revolutions, like all sublunary things; it became greatly declined from its splendor about the middle of the 17th century; and towards the period of the Revolution, the last proprietor of Ravenswood Castle saw himself compelled to part with the ancient family seat, and to remove himself to a lonely and sea-beaten tower, which, situated on the bleak shores between St. Abb's Head and the village of Eyemouth, looked out on the lonely and boisterous German Ocean. A black domain of wild pasture-land surrounded their new residence, and formed the remains of their property.

Lord Ravenswood, the heir of this ruined family, was far from bending his mind to his new condition of life. In the civil war of 1689 he had espoused the sinking side, and although he had escaped without the forfeiture of life or land, his blood had been attainted, and his title abolished. He was now called Lord Ravenswood only in courtesy.

This forfeited nobleman inherited the pride and turbulence, though not the fortune, of his house, and, as he imputed the final declension of his family to a particular individual, he honored that person with his full portion of hatred. This was the very man who had now become, by purchase, proprietor of Ravenswood, and the domains of which the heir of the house now stood dispossessed. He was descended of a family much less ancient than that of Lord Ravenswood, and which had only risen to wealth and political importance during the great civil wars. He himself had been bred to the bar, and had held high offices in the state, maintaining through life the character of a skilful fisher in the troubled waters of a state divided by factions, and governed by delegated authority; and of one who contrived to amass considerable sums of money in a country where there was but little to be gathered, and who equally knew the value of wealth and the various means of augmenting it and using it as an engine of increasing his power and influence.

Thus qualified and gifted, he was a dangerous antagonist to the fierce and imprudent Ravenswood. Whether he had given him good cause for the enmity with which the Baron regarded him, was a point on which men spoke differently. Some said the quarrel arose merely from the vindictive spirit and envy of Lord Ravenswood, who could not patiently behold another, though by just and fair purchase, become the proprietor of the estate and castle of his forefathers. But the greater part of the public, prone to slander the wealthy in their absence as to flatter them in their presence, held a less charitable opinion. They said that the Lord Keeper (for to this height Sir William Ashton had ascended) had, previous to the final purchase of the estate of Ravenswood, been concerned in extensive pecuniary transactions with the former proprietor; and, rather intimating what was probable than affirming anything positively, they asked which party was likely to have the advantage in stating and enforcing the claims arising out of these complicated affairs, and more than hinted the advantages which the cool lawyer and able politician must necessarily possess over the hot, fiery, and imprudent character whom he had involved in legal toils and pecuniary snares.

The character of the times aggravated these suspicions. "In those days there was no king in Israel." Since the departure of James VI. to assume the richer and more powerful crown of England, there had existed in Scotland contending parties, formed among the aristocracy, by whom, as their in-

trigues at the court of St. James's chanced to prevail, the delegated powers of sovereignty were alternately swayed. The evils attending upon this system of government resemble those which afflict the tenants of an Irish estate, the property of an absentee. There was no supreme power, claiming and possessing a general interest with the community at large, to whom the oppressed might appeal from subordinate tyranny, either for justice or for mercy. Let a monarch be as indolent, as selfish, as much disposed to arbitrary power as he will, still, in a free country, his own interests are so clearly connected with those of the public at large, and the evil consequences to his own authority are so obvious and imminent when a different course is pursued, that common policy, as well as common feeling, point to the equal distribution of justice, and to the establishment of the throne in righteousness. Thus, even sovereigns remarkable for usurpation and tyranny have been found rigorous in the administration of justice among their subjects, in cases where their own power and passions were not compromised.

It is very different when the powers of sovereignty are delegated to the head of an aristocratic faction, rivalled and pressed closely in the race of ambition by an adverse leader. His brief and precarious enjoyment of power must be employed in rewarding his partisans, in extending his influence, in oppressing and crushing his adversaries. Even Abou Hassan, the most disinterested of all viceroys, forgot not, during his caliphate of one day, to send a *douceur* of one thousand pieces of gold to his own household; and the Scottish vicegerents, raised to power by the strength of their faction, failed not to embrace the same means of rewarding them.

The administration of justice, in particular, was infected by the most gross partiality. A case of importance scarcely occurred in which there was not some ground for bias or partiality on the part of the judges, who were so little able to withstand the temptation that the adage, "Show me the man, and I will show you the law," became as prevalent as it was scandalous. One corruption led the way to others still more gross and profligate. The judge who lent his sacred authority in one case to support a friend, and in another to crush an enemy, and whose decisions were founded on family connections or political relations, could not be supposed inaccessible to direct personal motives; and the purse of the wealthy was too often believed to be thrown into the scale to weigh down the cause of the poor litigant. The subordinate officers of the law affected little scruple concerning bribery. Pieces of plate

and bags of money were sent in presents to the king's counsel, to influence their conduct, and poured forth, says a contemporary writer, like billets of wood upon their floors, without even the decency of concealment.

In such times, it was not over uncharitable to suppose that the statesman, practiced in courts of law, and a powerful member of a triumphant cabal, might find and use means of advantage over his less skilful and less favored adversary; and if it had been supposed that Sir William Ashton's conscience had been too delicate to profit by these advantages, it was believed that his ambition and desire of extending his wealth and consequence found as strong a stimulus in the exhortations of his lady as the daring aim of Macbeth in the days of yore.

Lady Ashton was of a family more distinguished than that of her lord, an advantage which she did not fail to use to the uttermost, in maintaining and extending her husband's influence over others, and, unless she was greatly belied, her own over him. She had been beautiful, and was stately and majestic in her appearance. Endowed by nature with strong powers and violent passions, experience had taught her to employ the one, and to conceal, if not to moderate, the other. She was a severe and strict observer of the external forms, at least, of devotion; her hospitality was splendid, even to ostentation; her address and manners, agreeable to the pattern most valued in Scotland at the period, were grave, dignified, and severely regulated by the rules of etiquette. Her character had always been beyond the breath of slander. And yet, with all these qualities to excite respect, Lady Ashton was seldom mentioned in the terms of love or affection. Interest—the interest of her family, if not her own—seemed too obviously the motive of her actions; and where this is the case, the sharp-judging and malignant public are not easily imposed upon by outward show. It was seen and ascertained that, in her most graceful courtesies and compliments, Lady Ashton no more lost sight of her object than the falcon in his airy wheel turns his quick eyes from his destined quarry; and hence, something of doubt and suspicion qualified the feelings with which her equals received her attentions. With her inferiors these feelings were mingled with fear; an impression useful to her purposes, so far as it enforced ready compliance with her requests and implicit obedience to her commands, but detrimental, because it cannot exist with affection or regard.

Even her husband, it is said, upon whose fortunes her talents and address had produced such emphatic influence,

regarded her with respectful awe rather than confiding attachment; and report said, there were times when he considered his grandeur as dearly purchased at the expense of domestic thraldom. Of this, however, much might be suspected, but little could be accurately known: Lady Ashton regarded the honor of her husband as her own, and was well aware how much that would suffer in the public eye should he appear a vassal to his wife. In all her arguments his opinion was quoted as infallible; his taste was appealed to, and his sentiments received, with the air of deference which a dutiful wife might seem to owe to a husband of Sir William Ashton's rank and character. But there was something under all this which rang false and hollow; and to those who watched this couple with close, and perhaps malicious, scrutiny it seemed evident that, in the haughtiness of a firmer character, higher birth, and more decided views of aggrandizement, the lady looked with some contempt on her husband, and that he regarded her with jealous fear, rather than with love or admiration.

Still, however, the leading and favorite interests of Sir William Ashton and his lady were the same, and they failed not to work in concert, although without cordiality, and to testify, in all exterior circumstances, that respect for each other which they were aware was necessary to secure that of the public.

Their union was crowned with several children, of whom three survived. One, the eldest son, was absent on his travels; the second, a girl of seventeen, and the third, a boy about three years younger, resided with their parents in Edinburgh during the sessions of the Scottish Parliament and Privy Council, at other times in the old Gothic castle of Ravenswood, to which the Lord Keeper had made large additions in the style of the 17th century.

Allan Lord Ravenswood, the late proprietor of that ancient mansion and the large estate annexed to it, continued for some time to wage ineffectual war with his successor concerning various points to which their former transactions had given rise, and which were successively determined in favor of the wealthy and powerful competitor, until death closed the litigation, by summoning Ravenswood to a higher bar. The thread of life, which had been long wasting, gave way during a fit of violent and impotent fury with which he was assailed on receiving the news of the loss of a cause, founded, perhaps, rather in equity than in law, the last which he had maintained against his powerful antagonist. His son witnessed his dying agonies, and heard the curses which he

breathed against his adversary, as if they had conveyed to him a legacy of vengeance. Other circumstances happened to exasperate a passion which was, and had long been, a prevalent vice in the Scottish disposition.

It was a November morning, and the cliffs which overlooked the ocean were hung with thick and heavy mist, when the portals of the ancient and half-ruinous tower, in which Lord Ravenswood had spent the last and troubled years of his life, opened, that his mortal remains might pass forward to an abode yet more dreary and lonely. The pomp of attendance, to which the deceased had, in his latter years, been a stranger, was revived as he was about to be consigned to the realms of forgetfulness.

Banner after banner, with the various devices and coats of this ancient family and its connections, followed each other in mournful procession from under the low-browed archway of the courtyard. The principal gentry of the country attended in the deepest mourning, and tempered the pace of their long train of horses to the solemn march befitting the occasion. Trumpets, with banners of crape attached to them, sent forth their long and melancholy notes to regulate the movements of the procession. An immense train of inferior mourners and menials closed the rear, which had not yet issued from the castle gate when the van had reached the chapel where the body was to be deposited.

Contrary to the custom, and even to the law, of the time, the body was met by a priest of the Scottish Episcopal communion, arrayed in his surplice, and prepared to read over the coffin of the deceased the funeral service of the church. Such had been the desire of Lord Ravenswood in his last illness, and it was readily complied with by the Tory gentlemen, or Cavaliers, as they affected to style themselves, in which faction most of his kinsmen were enrolled. The Presbyterian Church judicatory of the bounds, considering the ceremony as a bravading insult upon their authority, had applied to the Lord Keeper, as the nearest privy councillor, for a warrant to prevent its being carried into effect; so that, when the clergyman had opened his prayer-book, an officer of the law, supported by some armed men, commanded him to be silent. An insult which fired the whole assembly with indignation was particularly and instantly resented by the only son of the deceased, Edgar, popularly called the Master of Ravenswood, a youth of about twenty years of age. He clapped his hand on his sword, and, bidding the official person to desist at his peril from farther interruption, commanded the clergyman to pro-

ceed. The man attempted to enforce his commission; but as a hundred swords at once glittered in the air, he contented himself with protesting against the violence which had been offered to him in the execution of his duty, and stood aloof, a sullen and moody spectator of the ceremonial, muttering as one who should say, "You'll rue the day that clogs me with this answer."

The scene was worthy of an artist's pencil. Under the very arch of the house of death, the clergyman, affrighted at the scene, and trembling for his own safety, hastily and unwillingly rehearsed the solemn service of the church, and spoke "dust to dust and ashes to ashes," over ruined pride and decayed prosperity. Around stood the relations of the deceased, their countenances more in anger than in sorrow, and the drawn swords which they brandished forming a violent contrast with their deep mourning habits. In the countenance of the young man alone, resentment seemed for the moment overpowered by the deep agony with which he beheld his nearest, and almost his only, friend consigned to the tomb of his ancestry. A relative observed him turn deadly pale, when, all rites being now duly observed, it became the duty of the chief mourner to lower down into the charnel vault, where mouldering coffins showed their tattered velvet and decayed plating, the head of the corpse which was to be their partner in corruption. He stepped to the youth and offered his assistance, which, by a mute motion, Edgar Ravenswood rejected. Firmly, and without a tear, he performed that last duty. The stone was laid on the sepulchre, the door of the aisle was locked, and the youth took possession of its massive key.

As the crowd left the chapel, he paused on the steps which led to its Gothic chancel. "Gentlemen and friends," he said, "you have this day done no common duty to the body of your deceased kinsman. The rites of due observance, which, in other countries, are allowed as the due of the meanest Christian, would this day have been denied to the body of your relative—not certainly sprung of the meanest house in Scotland—had it not been assured to him by your courage. Others bury their dead in sorrow and tears, in silence and in reverence; our funeral rites are marred by the intrusion of bailiffs and ruffians, and our grief—the grief due to our departed friend—is chased from our cheeks by the glow of just indignation. But it is well that I know from what quiver this arrow has come forth. It was only he that dug the grave who could have the mean cruelty to disturb the obsequies;

and Heaven do as much to me and more, if I requite not to this man and his house the ruin and disgrace he has brought on me and mine!"

A numerous part of the assembly applauded this speech, as the spirited expression of just resentment; but the more cool and judicious regretted that it had been uttered. The fortunes of the heir of Ravenswood were too low to brave the farther hostility which they imagined these open expressions of resentment must necessarily provoke. Their apprehensions, however, proved groundless, at least in the immediate consequences of this affair.

The mourners returned to the tower, there, according to a custom but recently abolished in Scotland, to carouse deep healths to the memory of the deceased, to make the house of sorrow ring with sounds of jovialty and debauch, and to diminish, by the expense of a large and profuse entertainment, the limited revenues of the heir of him whose funeral they thus strangely honored. It was the custom, however, and on the present occasion it was fully observed. The tables swam in wine, the populace feasted in the courtyard, the yeomen in the kitchen and buttery; and two years' rent of Ravenswood's remaining property hardly defrayed the charge of the funeral revel. The wine did its office on all but the Master of Ravenswood, a title which he still retained, though forfeiture had attached to that of his father. He, while passing around the cup which he himself did not taste, soon listened to a thousand exclamations against the Lord Keeper, and passionate protestations of attachment to himself, and to the honor of his house. He listened with dark and sullen brow to ebullitions which he considered justly as equally evanescent with the crimson bubbles on the brink of the goblet, or at least with the vapors which its contents excited in the brains of the revellers around him.

When the last flask was emptied, they took their leave with deep protestations—to be forgotten on the morrow, if, indeed, those who made them should not think it necessary for their safety to make a more solemn retractation.

Accepting their adieus with an air of contempt which he could scarce conceal, Ravenswood at length beheld his ruinous habitation cleared of this confluence of riotous guests, and returned to the deserted hall, which now appeared doubly lonely from the cessation of that clamor to which it had so lately echoed. But its space was peopled by phantoms which the imagination of the young heir conjured up before him—the tarnished honor and degraded fortunes of his house, the

destruction of his own hopes, and the triumph of that family by whom they had been ruined. To a mind naturally of a gloomy cast here was ample room for meditation, and the musings of young Ravenswood were deep and unwitnessed.

The peasant who shows the ruins of the tower, which still crown the beetling cliff and behold the war of the waves, though no more tenanted save by the sea-mew and cormorant, even yet affirms that on this fatal night the Master of Ravenswood, by the bitter exclamations of his despair, evoked some evil fiend, under whose malignant influence the future tissue of incidents was woven. Alas! what fiend can suggest more desperate counsels than those adopted under the guidance of our own violent and unresisted passions?

CHAPTER III

Over Gods forebode, then said the King,
That thou shouldst shoot at me.
William Bell, Clim o' the Cleugh, etc.

On the morning after the funeral, the legal officer whose authority had been found insufficient to effect an interruption of the funeral solemnities of the late Lord Ravenswood, hastened to state before the Keeper the resistance which he had met with in the execution of his office.

The statesman was seated in a spacious library, once a banqueting-room in the old Castle of Ravenswood, as was evident from the armorial insignia still displayed on the carved roof, which was vaulted with Spanish chestnut, and on the stained glass of the casement, through which gleamed a dim yet rich light on the long rows of shelves, bending under the weight of legal commentators and monkish historians, whose ponderous volumes formed the chief and most valued contents of a Scottish historian [library] of the period. On the massive oaken table and reading-desk lay a confused mass of letters, petitions, and parchments; to toil among which was the pleasure at once and the plague of Sir William Ashton's life. His appearance was grave and even noble, well becoming one who held a high office in the state; and it was not save after long and intimate conversation with him upon topics of pressing and personal interest, that a stranger could have discovered something vacillating and uncertain in his resolutions; an infirmity of purpose, arising from a cautious and timid disposition, which, as he was conscious of its internal influence on his mind, he was, from pride as well as policy, most anxious to conceal from others.

He listened with great apparent composure to an exaggerated account of the tumult which had taken place at the funeral, of the contempt thrown on his own authority and that of the church and state; nor did he seem moved even by the faithful report of the insulting and threatening language which had been uttered by young Ravenswood and others, and obviously directed against himself. He heard,

also, what the man had been able to collect, in a very distorted and aggravated shape, of the toasts which had been drunk, and the menaces uttered, at the subsequent entertainment. In fine, he made careful notes of all these particulars, and of the names of the persons by whom, in case of need, an accusation, founded upon these violent proceedings, could be witnessed and made good, and dismissed his informer, secure that he was now master of the remaining fortune, and even of the personal liberty, of young Ravenswood.

When the door had closed upon the officer of the law, the Lord Keeper remained for a moment in deep meditation; then, starting from his seat, paced the apartment as one about to take a sudden and energetic resolution. "Young Ravenswood," he muttered, "is now mine—he is my own; he has placed himself in my hand, and he shall bend or break. I have not forgot the determined and dogged obstinacy with which his father fought every point to the last, resisted every effort at compromise, embroiled me in lawsuits, and attempted to assail my character when he could not otherwise impugn my rights. This boy he has left behind him—this Edgar—this hot-headed, hare-brained fool, has wrecked his vessel before she has cleared the harbor. I must see that he gains no advantage of some turning tide which may again float him off. These memoranda, properly stated to the privy council, cannot but be construed into an aggravated riot, in which the dignity both of the civil and ecclesiastical authorities stands committed. A heavy fine might be imposed; an order for committing him to Edinburgh or Blackness Castle seems not improper; even a charge of treason might be laid on many of these words and expressions, though God forbid I should prosecute the matter to that extent. No, I will not; I will not touch his life, even if it should be in my power; and yet, if he lives till a change of times, what follows? Restitution—perhaps revenge. I know Athole promised his interest to old Ravenswood, and here is his son already bandying and making a faction by his own contemptible influence. What a ready tool he would be for the use of those who are watching the downfall of our administration!"

While these thoughts were agitating the mind of the wily statesman, and while he was persuading himself that his own interest and safety, as well as those of his friends and party, depended on using the present advantage to the uttermost against young Ravenswood, the Lord Keeper sat down to his desk, and proceeded to draw up, for the information of the privy council, an account of the disorderly proceedings

which, in contempt of his warrant, had taken place at the funeral of Lord Ravenswood. The names of most of the parties concerned, as well as the fact itself, would, he was well aware, sound odiously in the ears of his colleagues in administration, and most likely instigate them to make an example of young Ravenswood, at least, *in terrorem*.

It was a point of delicacy, however, to select such expressions as might infer the young man's culpability, without seeming directly to urge it, which, on the part of Sir William Ashton, his father's ancient antagonist, could not but appear odious and invidious. While he was in the act of composition, laboring to find words which might indicate Edgar Ravenswood to be the cause of the uproar, without specifically making such a charge, Sir William, in a pause of his task, chanced, in looking upward, to see the crest of the family for whose heir he was whetting the arrows and disposing the toils of the law carved upon one of the corbeilles from which the vaulted roof of the apartment sprang. It was a black bull's head, with the legend, "I bide my time;" and the occasion upon which it was adopted mingled itself singularly and impressively with the subject of his present reflections.

It was said by a constant tradition that a Malisius de Ravenswood had, in the 13th century, been deprived of his castle and lands by a powerful usurper, who had for a while enjoyed his spoils in quiet. At length, on the eve of a costly banquet, Ravenswood, who had watched his opportunity, introduced himself into the castle with a small band of faithful retainers. The serving of the expected feast was impatiently looked for by the guests, and clamorously demanded by the temporary master of the castle. Ravenswood, who had assumed the disguise of a sewer upon the occasion, answered, in a stern voice, "I bide my time;" and at the same moment a bull's head, the ancient symbol of death, was placed upon the table. The explosion of the conspiracy took place upon the signal, and the usurper and his followers were put to death. Perhaps there was something in this still known and often repeated story which came immediately home to the breast and conscience of the Lord Keeper; for, putting from him the paper on which he had begun his report, and carefully locking the memoranda which he had prepared into a cabinet which stood beside him, he proceeded to walk abroad, as if for the purpose of collecting his ideas, and reflecting farther on the consequences of the step which he was about to take, ere yet they became inevitable.

In passing through a large Gothic anteroom, Sir William Ashton heard the sound of his daughter's lute. Music, when

the performers are concealed, affects us with a pleasure mingled with surprise, and reminds us of the natural concert of birds among the leafy bowers. The statesman, though little accustomed to give way to emotions of this natural and simple class, was still a man and a father. He stopped, therefore, and listened, while the silver tones of Lucy Ashton's voice mingled with the accompaniment in an ancient air, to which some one had adapted the following words :

> "Look not thou on beauty's charming,
> Sit thou still when kings are arming,
> Taste not when the wine-cup glistens,
> Speak not when the people listens,
> Stop thine ear against the singer,
> From the red gold keep thy finger,
> Vacant heart, and hand, and eye,
> Easy live and quiet die."

The sounds ceased, and the Keeper entered his daughter's apartment.

The words she had chosen seemed particularly adapted to her character ; for Lucy Ashton's exquisitely beautiful, yet somewhat girlish features were formed to express peace of mind, serenity, and indifference to the tinsel of worldly pleasure. Her locks, which were of shadowy gold, divided on a brow of exquisite whiteness, like a gleam of broken and pallid sunshine upon a hill of snow. The expression of the countenance was in the last degree gentle, soft, timid, and feminine, and seemed rather to shrink from the most casual look of a stranger than to court his admiration. Something there was of a Madonna cast, perhaps the result of delicate health, and of residence in a family where the dispositions of the inmates were fiercer, more active, and energetic than her own.

Yet her passiveness of disposition was by no means owing to an indifferent or unfeeling mind. Left to the impulse of her own taste and feelings, Lucy Ashton was peculiarly accessible to those of a romantic cast. Her secret delight was in the old legendary tales of ardent devotion and unalterable affection, checkered as they so often are with strange adventures and supernatural horrors. This was her favored fairy realm, and here she erected her aerial palaces. But it was only in secret that she labored at this delusive though delightful architecture. In her retired chamber, or in the woodland bower which she had chosen for her own, and called after her name, she was in fancy distributing the prizes at the tournament, or raining down influence from her eyes on the valiant combatants ; or she was wandering in the wilder-

ness with Una, under escort of the generous lion; or she was identifying herself with the simple yet noble-minded Miranda in the isle of wonder and enchantment.

But in her exterior relations to things of this world, Lucy willingly received the ruling impulse from those around her. The alternative was, in general, too indifferent to her to render resistance desirable, and she willingly found a motive for decision in the opinion of her friends which perhaps she might have sought for in vain in her own choice. Every reader must have observed in some family of his acquaintance some individual of a temper soft and yielding, who, mixed with stronger and more ardent minds, is borne along by the will of others, with as little power of opposition as the flower which is flung into a running stream. It usually happens that such a compliant and easy disposition, which resigns itself without murmur to the guidance of others, becomes the darling of those to whose inclinations its own seem to be offered, in ungrudging and ready sacrifice.

This was eminently the case with Lucy Ashton. Her politic, wary, and worldly father felt for her an affection the strength of which sometimes surprised him into an unusual emotion. Her elder brother, who trod the path of ambition with a haughtier step than his father, had also more of human affection. A soldier, and in a dissolute age, he preferred his sister Lucy even to pleasure and to military preferment and distinction. Her younger brother, at the age when trifles chiefly occupied his mind, made her the confidant of all his pleasures and anxieties, his success in field-sports, and his quarrels with his tutor and instructors. To these details, however trivial, Lucy lent patient and not indifferent attention. They moved and interested Henry, and that was enough to secure her ear.

Her mother alone did not feel that distinguished and predominating affection with which the rest of the family cherished Lucy. She regarded what she termed her daughter's want of spirit as a decided mark that the more plebeian blood of her father predominated in Lucy's veins, and used to call her in derision her Lammermoor Shepherdess. To dislike so gentle and inoffensive a being was impossible; but Lady Ashton preferred her eldest son, on whom had descended a large portion of her own ambitious and undaunted disposition, to a daughter whose softness of temper seemed allied to feebleness of mind. Her eldest son was the more partially beloved by his mother because, contrary to the usual custom of Scottish families of distinction, he had been named after the head of the house.

"My Sholto," she said, "will support the untarnished honor of his maternal house, and elevate and support that of his father. Poor Lucy is unfit for courts or crowded halls. Some country laird must be her husband, rich enough to supply her with every comfort, without an effort on her own part, so that she may have nothing to shed a tear for but the tender apprehension lest he may break his neck in a fox-chase. It was not so, however, that our house was raised, nor is it so that it can be fortified and augmented. The Lord Keeper's dignity is yet new; it must be borne as if we were used to its weight, worthy of it, and prompt to assert and maintain it. Before ancient authorities men bend from customary and hereditary deference; in our presence they will stand erect, unless they are compelled to prostrate themselves. A daughter fit for the sheepfold or the cloister is ill qualified to exact respect where it is yielded with reluctance; and since Heaven refused us a third boy, Lucy should have held a character fit to supply his place. The hour will be a happy one which disposes her hand in marriage to some one whose energy is greater than her own, or whose ambition is of as low an order."

So meditated a mother to whom the qualities of her children's hearts, as well as the prospect of their domestic happiness, seemed light in comparison to their rank and temporal greatness. But, like many a parent of hot and impatient character, she was mistaken in estimating the feelings of her daughter, who, under a semblance of extreme indifference, nourished the germ of those passions which sometimes spring up in one night, like the gourd of the prophet, and astonish the observer by their unexpected ardor and intensity. In fact, Lucy's sentiments seemed chill because nothing had occurred to interest or awaken them. Her life had hitherto flowed on in a uniform and gentle tenor, and happy for her had not its present smoothness of current resembled that of the stream as it glides downwards to the waterfall!

"So, Lucy," said her father, entering as her song was ended, "does your musical philosopher teach you to contemn the world before you know it? That is surely something premature. Or did you but speak according to the fashion of fair maidens, who are always to hold the pleasures of life in contempt till they are pressed upon them by the address of some gentle knight?"

Lucy blushed, disclaimed any inference respecting her own choice being drawn from her selection of a song, and readily laid aside her instrument at her father's request that she would attend him in his walk.

A large and well-wooded park, or rather chase, stretched along the hill behind the castle, which, occupying, as we have noticed, a pass ascending from the plain, seemed built in its very gorge to defend the forest ground which arose behind it in shaggy majesty. Into this romantic region the father and daughter proceeded, arm in arm, by a noble avenue overarched by embowering elms, beneath which groups of the fallow-deer were seen to stray in distant perspective. As they paced slowly on, admiring the different points of view, for which Sir William Ashton, notwithstanding the nature of his usual avocations, had considerable taste and feeling, they were overtaken by the forester, or park-keeper, who, intent on sylvan sport, was proceeding with his cross-bow over his arm, and a hound led in leash by his boy, into the interior of the wood.

"Going to shoot us a piece of venison, Norman?" said his master, as he returned the woodman's salutation.

"Saul, your honor, and that I am. Will it please you to see the sport?"

"O no," said his lordship, after looking at his daughter, whose color fled at the idea of seeing the deer shot, although, had her father expressed his wish that they should accompany Norman, it was probable she would not even have hinted her reluctance.

The forester shrugged his shoulders. "It was a disheartening thing," he said, "when none of the gentles came down to see the sport. He hoped Captain Sholto would be soon hame, or he might shut up his shop entirely; for Mr. Harry was kept sae close wi' his Latin nonsense that, though his will was very gude to be in the wood from morning till night, there would be a hopeful lad lost, and no making a man of him. It was not so, he had heard, in Lord Ravenswood's time: when a buck was to be killed, man and mother's son ran to see; and when the deer fell, the knife was always presented to the knight, and he never gave less than a dollar for the compliment. And there was Edgar Ravenswood—Master of Ravenswood that is now—when he goes up to the wood—there hasna been a better hunter since Tristrem's time—when Sir Edgar hauds out, down goes the deer, faith. But we hae lost a' sense of woodcraft on this side of the hill."

There was much in this harangue highly displeasing to the Lord Keeper's feelings; he could not help observing that his menial despised him almost avowedly for not possessing that taste for sport which in those times was deemed the natural and indispensable attribute of a real gentleman. But the master of the game is, in all country houses, a man of

great importance, and entitled to use considerable freedom of speech. Sir William, therefore, only smiled and replied, "He had something else to think upon to-day than killing deer;" meantime, taking out his purse, he gave the ranger a dollar for his encouragement. The fellow received it as the waiter of a fashionable hotel receives double his proper fee from the hands of a country gentleman—that is, with a smile, in which pleasure at the gift is mingled with contempt for the ignorance of the donor. "Your honor is the bad paymaster," he said, "who pays before it is done. What would you do were I to miss the buck after you have paid me my wood-fee?"

"I suppose," said the Keeper, smiling, "you would hardly guess what I mean were I to tell you of a *condictio indebiti?*"

"Not I, on my saul. I guess it is some law phrase; but sue a beggar, and—your honor knows what follows. Well, but I will be just with you, and if bow and brach fail not, you shall have a piece of game two fingers fat on the brisket."

As he was about to go off, his master again called him, and asked, as if by accident, whether the Master of Ravenswood was actually so brave a man and so good a shooter as the world spoke him.

"Brave!—brave enough, I warrant you," answered Norman. "I was in the wood at Tyninghame when there was a sort of gallants hunting with my lord; on my saul, there was a buck turned to bay made us all stand back—a stout old Trojan of the first head, ten-tined branches, and a brow as broad as e'er a bullock's. Egad, he dashed at the old lord, and there would have been inlake among the peerage, if the Master had not whipped roundly in, and hamstrung him with his cutlass. He was but sixteen then, bless his heart."

"And is he as ready with the gun as with the couteau?" said Sir William.

"He'll strike this silver dollar out from between my finger and thumb at fourscore yards, and I'll hold it out for a gold merk; what more would ye have of eye, hand, lead, and gunpowder?"

"O, no more to be wished, certainly," said the Lord Keeper; "but we keep you from your sport, Norman. Good-morrow, good Norman."

And, humming his rustic roundelay, the yeoman went on his road, the sound of his rough voice gradually dying away as the distance betwixt them increased:

"The monk must arise when the matins ring,
The abbot may sleep to their chime;
But the yeoman must start when the bugles sing,
'Tis time, my hearts, 'tis time.

"There's bucks and raes on Bilhope braes,
There's a herd on Shortwood Shaw;
But a lily-white doe in the garden goes,
She's fairly worth them a'."

"Has this fellow," said the Lord Keeper, when the yeoman's song had died on the wind, "ever served the Ravenswood people, that he seems so much interested in them? I suppose you know, Lucy, for you make it a point of conscience to record the special history of every boor about the castle."

"I am not quite so faithful a chronicler, my dear father; but I believe that Norman once served here while a boy, and before he went to Ledington, whence you hired him. But if you want to know anything of the former family, Old Alice is the best authority."

"And what should I have to do with them, pray, Lucy," said her father, "or with their history or accomplishments?"

"Nay, I do not know, sir; only that you were asking questions of Norman about young Ravenswood."

"Pshaw, child!" replied her father, yet immediately added, "And who is Old Alice? I think you know all the old women in the country."

"To be sure I do, or how could I help the old creatures when they are in hard times? And as to Old Alice, she is the very empress of old women and queen of gossips, so far as legendary lore is concerned. She is blind, poor old soul, but when she speaks to you, you would think she has some way of looking into your very heart. I am sure I often cover my face, or turn it away, for it seems as if she saw one change color, though she has been blind these twenty years. She is worth visiting, were it but to say you have seen a blind and paralytic old woman have so much acuteness of perception and dignity of manners. I assure you, she might be a countess from her language and behavior. Come, you must go to see Alice; we are not a quarter of a mile from her cottage."

"All this, my dear," said the Lord Keeper, "is no answer to my question, who this woman is, and what is her connection with the former proprietor's family?"

"O, it was something of a nouriceship, I believe; and she remained here, because her two grandsons were engaged in your service. But it was against her will, I fancy; for the poor old creature is always regretting the change of times and of property."

"I am much obliged to her," answered the Lord Keeper. "She and her folk eat my bread and drink my cup, and are lamenting all the while that they are not still under a family which never could do good, either to themselves or any one else!"

"Indeed," replied Lucy, "I am certain you do Old Alice injustice. She has nothing mercenary about her, and would not accept a penny in charity, if it were to save her from being starved. She is only talkative, like all old folk when you put them upon stories of their youth; and she speaks about the Ravenswood people, because she lived under them so many years. But I am sure she is grateful to you, sir, for your protection, and that she would rather speak to you than to any other person in the whole world beside. Do, sir, come and see Old Alice."

And with the freedom of an indulged daughter she dragged the Lord Keeper in the direction she desired.

CHAPTER IV

Through tops of the high trees she did descry
A little smoke, whose vapor, thin and light,
Reeking aloft, uprolled to the sky,
Which cheerful sign did send unto her sight,
That in the same did wonne some living wight.
SPENSER.

LUCY acted as her father's guide, for he was too much engrossed with his political labors, or with society, to be perfectly acquainted with his own extensive domains, and, moreover, was generally an inhabitant of the city of Edinburgh; and she, on the other hand, had, with her mother, resided the whole summer in Ravenswood, and, partly from taste, partly from want of any other amusement, had, by her frequent rambles, learned to know each lane, alley, dingle, or bushy dell,

And every bosky bourne from side to side.

We have said that the Lord Keeper was not indifferent to the beauties of nature; and we add, in justice to him, that he felt them doubly when pointed out by the beautiful, simple, and interesting girl who, hanging on his arm with filial kindness, now called him to admire the size of some ancient oak, and now the unexpected turn where the path, developing its maze from glen or dingle, suddenly reached an eminence commanding an extensive view of the plains beneath them, and then gradually glided away from the prospect to lose itself among rocks and thickets, and guide to scenes of deeper seclusion.

It was when pausing on one of those points of extensive and commanding view that Lucy told her father they were close by the cottage of her blind *protégée;* and on turning from the little hill, a path which led around it, worn by the daily steps of the infirm inmate, brought them in sight of the hut, which, embosomed in a deep and obscure dell, seemed to have been so situated purposely to bear a correspondence with the darkened state of its inhabitant.

The cottage was situated immediately under a tall rock,

which in some measure beetled over it, as if threatening to drop some detached fragment from its brow on the frail tenement beneath. The hut itself was constructed of turf and stones, and rudely roofed over with thatch, much of which was in a dilapidated condition. The thin blue smoke rose from it in a light column, and curled upward along the white face of the incumbent rock, giving the scene a tint of exquisite softness. In a small and rude garden, surrounded by straggling elder-bushes, which formed a sort of imperfect hedge, sat near to the bee-hives, by the produce of which she lived, that "woman old" whom Lucy had brought her father hither to visit.

Whatever there had been which was disastrous in her fortune, whatever there was miserable in her dwelling, it was easy to judge by the first glance that neither years, poverty, misfortune, nor infirmity had broken the spirit of this remarkable woman.

She occupied a turf seat, placed under a weeping birch of unusual magnitude and age, as Judah is represented sitting under her palm-tree, with an air at once of majesty and of dejection. Her figure was tall, commanding, and but little bent by the infirmities of old age. Her dress, though that of a peasant, was uncommonly clean, forming in that particular a strong contrast to most of her rank, and was disposed with an attention to neatness, and even to taste, equally unusual. But it was her expression of countenance which chiefly struck the spectator, and induced most persons to address her with a degree of deference and civility very inconsistent with the miserable state of her dwelling, and which, nevertheless, she received with that easy composure which showed she felt it to be her due. She had once been beautiful, but her beauty had been of a bold and masculine cast, such as does not survive the bloom of youth; yet her features continued to express strong sense, deep reflection, and a character of sober pride, which, as we have already said of her dress, appeared to argue a conscious superiority to those of her own rank. It scarce seemed possible that a face, deprived of the advantage of sight, could have expressed character so strongly; but her eyes, which were almost totally closed, did not, by the display of their sightless orbs, mar the countenance to which they could add nothing. She seemed in a ruminating posture, soothed, perhaps, by the murmurs of the busy tribe around her to abstraction, though not to slumber.

Lucy undid the latch of the little garden gate, and

solicited the old woman's attention. "My father, Alice, is come to see you."

"He is welcome, Miss Ashton, and so are you," said the old woman, turning and inclining her head towards her visitors.

"This is a fine morning for your bee-hives, mother," said the Lord Keeper, who, struck with the outward appearance of Alice, was somewhat curious to know if her conversation would correspond with it.

"I believe so, my lord," she replied; "I feel the air breathe milder than of late."

"You do not," resumed the statesman, "take charge of these bees yourself, mother? How do you manage them?"

"By delegates, as kings do their subjects," resumed Alice; "and I am fortunate in a prime minister. Here, Babie."

She whistled on a small silver call which hung around her neck, and which at that time was sometimes used to summon domestics, and Babie, a girl of fifteen, made her appearance from the hut, not altogether so cleanly arrayed as she would probably have been had Alice had the use of her eyes, but with a greater air of neatness than was upon the whole to have been expected.

"Babie," said her mistress, "offer some bread and honey to the Lord Keeper and Miss Ashton; they will excuse your awkwardness if you use cleanliness and dispatch."

Babie performed her mistress's command with the grace which was naturally to have been expected, moving to and fro with a lobster-like gesture, her feet and legs tending one way, while her head, turned in a different direction, was fixed in wonder upon the laird, who was more frequently heard of than seen by his tenants and dependants. The bread and honey, however, deposited on a plantain-leaf, was offered and accepted in all due courtesy. The Lord Keeper, still retaining the place which he had occupied on the decayed trunk of a fallen tree, looked as if he wished to prolong the interview, but was at a loss how to introduce a suitable subject.

"You have been long a resident on this property?" he said, after a pause.

"It is now nearly sixty years since I first knew Ravenswood," answered the old dame, whose conversation, though perfectly civil and respectful, seemed cautiously limited to the unavoidable and necessary task of replying to Sir William.

"You are not, I should judge by your accent, of this country originally?" said the Lord Keeper, in continuation.

"No; I am by birth an Englishwoman."

"Yet you seem attached to this country as if it were your own."

"It is here," replied the blind woman, "that I have drank the cup of joy and of sorrow which Heaven destined for me. I was here the wife of an upright and affectionate husband for more than twenty years; I was here the mother of six promising children; it was here that God deprived me of all these blessings; it was here they died, and yonder, by yon ruined chapel, they lie all buried. I had no country but theirs while they lived; I have none but theirs now they are no more."

"But your house," said the Lord Keeper, looking at it, "is miserably ruinous?"

"Do, my dear father," said Lucy, eagerly, yet bashfully, catching at the hint, "give orders to make it better; that is, if you think it proper."

"It will last my time, my dear Miss Lucy," said the blind woman; "I would not have my lord give himself the least trouble about it."

"But," said Lucy, "you once had a much better house, and were rich, and now in your old age to live in this hovel!"

"It is as good as I deserve, Miss Lucy; if my heart has not broke with what I have suffered, and seen others suffer, it must have been strong enough, and the rest of this old frame has no right to call itself weaker."

"You have probably witnessed many changes," said the Lord Keeper; "but your experience must have taught you to expect them."

"It has taught me to endure them, my lord," was the reply.

"Yet you knew that they must needs arrive in the course of years?" said the statesman.

"Ay; as I knew that the stump, on or beside which you sit, once a tall and lofty tree, must needs one day fall by decay, or by the axe; yet I hoped my eyes might not witness the downfall of the tree which overshadowed my dwelling."

"Do not suppose," said the Lord Keeper, "that you will lose any interest with me for looking back with regret to the days when another family possessed my estates. You had reason, doubtless, to love them, and I respect your gratitude. I will order some repairs in your cottage, and I hope we shall live to be friends when we know each other better."

"Those of my age," returned the dame, "make no new friends. I thank you for your bounty, it is well intended undoubtedly; but I have all I want, and I cannot accept more at your lordship's hands."

"Well, then," continued the Lord Keeper, "at least allow me to say, that I look upon you as a woman of sense and education beyond your appearance, and that I hope you will continue to reside on this property of mine rent-free for your life."

"I hope I shall," said the old dame, composedly; "I believe that was made an article in the sale of Ravenswood to your lordship, though such a trifling circumstance may have escaped your recollection."

"I remember—I recollect," said his lordship, somewhat confused. "I perceive you are too much attached to your old friends to accept any benefit from their successor."

"Far from it, my lord; I am grateful for the benefits which I decline, and I wish I could pay you for offering them, better than what I am now about to say." The Lord Keeper looked at her in some surprise, but said not a word. "My lord," she continued, in an impressive and solemn tone, "take care what you do; you are on the brink of a precipice."

"Indeed?" said the Lord Keeper, his mind reverting to the political circumstances of the country. "Has anything come to your knowledge—any plot or conspiracy?"

"No, my lord; those who traffic in such commodities do not call into their councils the old, blind, and infirm. My warning is of another kind. You have driven matters hard with the house of Ravenswood. Believe a true tale: they are a fierce house, and there is danger in dealing with men when they become desperate."

"Tush," answered the Keeper; "what has been between us has been the work of the law, not my doing; and to the law they must look, if they would impugn my proceedings."

"Ay, but they may think otherwise, and take the law into their own hand, when they fail of other means of redress."

"What mean you?" said the Lord Keeper. "Young Ravenswood would not have recourse to personal violence?"

"God forbid I should say so! I know nothing of the youth but what is honorable and open. Honorable and open, said I? I should have added, free, generous, noble. But he is still a Ravenswood, and may bide his time. Remember the fate of Sir George Lockhart." *

The Lord Keeper started as she called to his recollection a tragedy so deep and so recent. The old woman proceeded: "Chiesley, who did the deed, was a relative of Lord Ra-

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venswood. In the hall of Ravenswood, in my presence and in that of others, he avowed publicly his determination to do the cruelty which he afterwards committed. I could not keep silence, though to speak it ill became my station. 'You are devising a dreadful crime,' I said, 'for which you must reckon before the judgment seat.' Never shall I forget his look, as he replied, 'I must reckon then for many things, and will reckon for this also.' Therefore I may well say, beware of pressing a desperate man with the hand of authority. There is blood of Chiesley in the veins of Ravenswood, and one drop of it were enough to fire him in the circumstances in which he is placed. I say, beware of him."

The old dame had, either intentionally or by accident, harped aright the fear of the Lord Keeper. The desperate and dark resource of private assassination, so familiar to a Scottish baron in former times, had even in the present age been too frequently resorted to under the pressure of unusual temptation, or where the mind of the actor was prepared for such a crime. Sir William Ashton was aware of this; as also that young Ravenswood had received injuries sufficient to prompt him to that sort of revenge, which becomes a frequent though fearful consequence of the partial administration of justice. He endeavored to disguise from Alice the nature of the apprehensions which he entertained; but so ineffectually, that a person even of less penetration than nature had endowed her with must necessarily have been aware that the subject lay near his bosom. His voice was changed in its accent as he replied to her, "That the Master of Ravenswood was a man of honor; and, were it otherwise, that the fate of Chiesley of Dalry was a sufficient warning to any one who should dare to assume the office of avenger of his own imaginary wrongs." And having hastily uttered these expressions, he rose and left the place without waiting for a reply.

CHAPTER V

Is she a Capulet?
O dear account! my life is my foe's debt.
SHAKESPEARE.

THE Lord Keeper walked for nearly a quarter of a mile in profound silence. His daughter, naturally timid, and bred up in those ideas of filial awe and implicit obedience which were inculcated upon the youth of that period, did not venture to interrupt his meditations.

"Why do you look so pale, Lucy?" said her father, turning suddenly round and breaking silence.

According to the ideas of the time, which did not permit a young woman to offer her sentiments on any subject of importance unless especially required to do so, Lucy was bound to appear ignorant of the meaning of all that had passed betwixt Alice and her father, and imputed the emotion he had observed to the fear of the wild cattle which grazed in that part of the extensive chase through which they were now walking.

Of these animals, the descendants of the savage herds which anciently roamed free in the Caledonian forests, it was formerly a point of state to preserve a few in the parks of the Scottish nobility. Specimens continued within the memory of man to be kept at least at three houses of distinction—Hamilton, namely, Drumlanrig, and Cumbernauld. They had degenerated from the ancient race in size and strength, if we are to judge from the accounts of old chronicles, and from the formidable remains frequently discovered in bogs and morasses when drained and laid open. The bull had lost the shaggy honors of his mane, and the race was small and light made, in color a dingy white, or rather a pale yellow, with black horns and hoofs. They retained, however, in some measure, the ferocity of their ancestry, could not be domesticated on account of their antipathy to the human race, and were often dangerous if approached unguardedly, or wantonly disturbed. It was this last reason which has occasioned their being extirpated at the places we have mentioned, where probably they would otherwise have been

retained as appropriate inhabitants of a Scottish woodland, and fit tenants for a baronial forest. A few, if I mistake not, are still preserved at Chillingham Castle, in Northumberland, the seat of the Earl of Tankerville.*

It was to her finding herself in the vicinity of a group of three or four of these animals, that Lucy thought proper to impute those signs of fear which had arisen in her countenance for a different reason. For she had been familiarized with the appearance of the wild cattle during her walks in the chase; and it was not then, as it may be now, a necessary part of a young lady's demeanor, to indulge in causeless tremors of the nerves. On the present occasion, however, she speedily found cause for real terror.

Lucy had scarcely replied to her father in the words we have mentioned, and he was just about to rebuke her supposed timidity, when a bull, stimulated either by the scarlet color of Miss Ashton's mantle, or by one of those fits of capricious ferocity to which their dispositions are liable, detached himself suddenly from the group which was feeding at the upper extremity of a grassy glade, that seemed to lose itself among the crossing and entangled boughs. The animal approached the intruders on his pasture ground, at first slowly, pawing the ground with his hoof, bellowing from time to time, and tearing up the sand with his horns, as if to lash himself up to rage and violence.

The Lord Keeper, who observed the animal's demeanor, was aware that he was about to become mischievous, and, drawing his daughter's arm under his own, began to walk fast along the avenue, in hopes to get out of his sight and his reach. This was the most injudicious course he could have adopted, for, encouraged by the appearance of flight, the bull began to pursue them at full speed. Assailed by a danger so imminent, firmer courage than that of the Lord Keeper might have given way. But paternal tenderness, "love strong as death," sustained him. He continued to support and drag onward his daughter, until her fears altogether depriving her of the power of flight, she sank down by his side; and when he could no longer assist her to escape, he turned round and placed himself betwixt her and the raging animal, which, advancing in full career, its brutal fury enhanced by the rapidity of the pursuit, was now within a few yards of them. The Lord Keeper had no weapons; his age and gravity dispensed even with the usual appendage of a walking sword—could such appendage have availed him anything.

It seemed inevitable, that the father or daughter, or both, should have fallen victims to the impending danger, when a shot from the neighboring thicket arrested the progress of the animal. He was so truly struck between the junction of the spine with the skull, that the wound, which in any other part of his body might scarce have impeded his career, proved instantly fatal. Stumbling forward with a hideous bellow, the progressive force of his previous motion, rather than any operation of his limbs, carried him up to within three yards of the astonished Lord Keeper, where he rolled on the ground, his limbs darkened with the black death-sweat, and quivering with the last convulsions of muscular motion.

Lucy lay senseless on the ground, insensible of the wonderful deliverance which she had experienced. Her father was almost equally stupefied, so rapid and unexpected had been the transition from the horrid death which seemed inevitable to perfect security. He gazed on the animal, terrible even in death, with a species of mute and confused astonishment, which did not permit him distinctly to understand what had taken place ; and so inaccurate was his consciousness of what had passed, that he might have supposed the bull had been arrested in its career by a thunderbolt, had he not observed among the branches of the thicket the figure of a man, with a short gun or musquetoon in his hand.

This instantly recalled him to a sense of their situation : a glance at his daughter reminded him of the necessity of procuring her assistance. He called to the man, whom he concluded to be one of his foresters, to give immediate attention to Miss Ashton, while he himself hastened to call assistance. The huntsman approached them accordingly and the Lord Keeper saw he was a stranger, but was too much agitated to make any farther remarks. In a few hurried words he directed the shooter, as stronger and more active than himself, to carry the young lady to a neighboring fountain, while he went back to Alice's hut to procure more aid.

The man to whose timely interference they had been so much indebted did not seem inclined to leave his good work half finished. He raised Lucy from the ground in his arms, and conveying her through the glades of the forest by paths with which he seemed well acquainted, stopped not until he laid her in safety by the side of a plentiful and pellucid fountain, which had been once covered in, screened and decorated with architectural ornaments of a Gothic character. But now the vault which had covered it being broken down and riven, and the Gothic font ruined and demolished, the stream burst

forth from the recess of the earth in open day, and winded its way among the broken sculpture and moss-grown stones which lay in confusion around its source.

Tradition, always busy, at least in Scotland, to grace with a legendary tale a spot in itself interesting, had ascribed a cause of peculiar veneration to this fountain. A beautiful young lady met one of the Lords of Ravenswood while hunting near this spot, and, like a second Egeria, had captivated the affections of the feudal Numa. They met frequently afterwards, and always at sunset, the charms of the nymph's mind completing the conquest which her beauty had begun, and the mystery of the intrigue adding zest to both. She always appeared and disappeared close by the fountain, with which, therefore, her lover judged she had some inexplicable connection. She placed certain restrictions on their intercourse, which also savored of mystery. They met only once a week—Friday was the appointed day—and she explained to the Lord of Ravenswood that they were under the necessity of separating as soon as the bell of a chapel belonging to a hermitage in the adjoining wood, now long ruinous, should toll the hour of vespers. In the course of his confession, the Baron of Ravenswood intrusted the hermit with the secret of this singular amour, and Father Zachary drew the necessary and obvious consequence that his patron was enveloped in the toils of Satan, and in danger of destruction, both to body and soul. He urged these perils to the Baron with all the force of monkish rhetoric, and described, in the most frightful colors, the real character and person of the apparently lovely Naiad, whom he hesitated not to denounce as a limb of the kingdom of darkness. The lover listened with obstinate incredulity; and it was not until worn out by the obstinacy of the anchoret that he consented to put the state and condition of his mistress to a certain trial, and for that purpose acquiesced in Zachary's proposal that on their next interview the vespers bell should be rung half an hour later than usual. The hermit maintained and bucklered his opinion, by quotations from *Malleus Malificarum*, Sprengerus, Remigius, and other learned demonologists, that the Evil One, thus seduced to remain behind the appointed hour, would assume her true shape, and, having appeared to her terrified lover as a fiend of hell, would vanish from him in a flash of sulphurous lightning. Raymond of Ravenswood acquiesced in the experiment, not incurious concerning the issue, though confident it would disappoint the expectations of the hermit.

At the appointed hour the lovers met, and their interview

was protracted beyond that at which they usually parted, by the delay of the priest to ring his usual curfew. No change took place upon the nymph's outward form; but as soon as the lengthening shadows made her aware that the usual hour of the vespers chime was passed, she tore herself from her lover's arms with a shriek of despair, bid him adieu forever, and, plunging into the fountain, disappeared from his eyes. The bubbles occasioned by her descent were crimsoned with blood as they arose, leading the distracted Baron to infer that his ill-judged curiosity had occasioned the death of this interesting and mysterious being. The remorse which he felt, as well as the recollection of her charms, proved the penance of his future life, which he lost in the battle of Flodden not many months after. But, in memory of his Naiad, he had previously ornamented the fountain in which she appeared to reside, and secured its waters from profanation or pollution by the small vaulted building of which the fragments still remained scattered around it. From this period the house of Ravenswood was supposed to have dated its decay.

Such was the generally-received legend, which some, who would seem wiser than the vulgar, explained as obscurely intimating the fate of a beautiful maid of plebeian rank, the mistress of this Raymond, whom he slew in a fit of jealousy, and whose blood was mingled with the waters of the locked fountain, as it was commonly called. Others imagined that the tale had a more remote origin in the ancient heathen mythology. All, however, agreed that the spot was fatal to the Ravenswood family; and that to drink of the waters of the well, or even approach its brink, was as ominous to a descendant of that house as for a Grahame to wear green, a Bruce to kill a spider, or a St. Clair to cross the Ord on a Monday.

It was on this ominous spot that Lucy Ashton first drew breath after her long and almost deadly swoon. Beautiful and pale as the fabulous Naiad in the last agony of separation from her lover, she was seated so as to rest with her back against a part of the ruined wall, while her mantle, dripping with the water which her protector had used profusely to recall her senses, clung to her slender and beautifully proportioned form.

The first moment of recollection brought to her mind the danger which had overpowered her senses; the next called to remembrance that of her father. She looked around; he was nowhere to be seen. "My father, my father!" was all that she could ejaculate.

"Sir William is safe," answered the voice of a stranger—"perfectly safe, and will be with you instantly."

"Are you sure of that?" exclaimed Lucy. "The bull was close by us. Do not stop me: I must go to seek my father!"

And she arose with that purpose; but her strength was so much exhausted that, far from possessing the power to execute her purpose, she must have fallen against the stone on which she had leaned, probably not without sustaining serious injury.

The stranger was so near to her that, without actually suffering her to fall, he could not avoid catching her in his arms, which, however, he did with a momentary reluctance, very unusual when youth interposes to prevent beauty from danger. It seemed as if her weight, slight as it was, proved too heavy for her young and athletic assistant, for, without feeling the temptation of detaining her in his arms even for a single instant, he again placed her on the stone from which she had risen, and retreating a few steps, repeated hastily, "Sir William Ashton is perfectly safe, and will be here instantly. Do not make yourself anxious on his account: Fate has singularly preserved him. You, madam, are exhausted, and must not think of rising until you have some assistance more suitable than mine."

Lucy, whose senses were by this time more effectually collected, was naturally led to look at the stranger with attention. There was nothing in his appearance which should have rendered him unwilling to offer his arm to a young lady who required support, or which could have induced her to refuse his assistance; and she could not help thinking, even in that moment, that he seemed cold and reluctant to offer it. A shooting-dress of dark cloth intimated the rank of the wearer, though concealed in part by a large and loose cloak of a dark brown color. A montero cap and a black feather drooped over the wearer's brow, and partly concealed his features, which, so far as seen, were dark, regular, and full of majestic, though somewhat sullen, expression. Some secret sorrow, or the brooding spirit of some moody passion, had quenched the light and ingenuous vivacity of youth in a countenance singularly fitted to display both, and it was not easy to gaze on the stranger without a secret impression either of pity or awe, or at least of doubt and curiosity allied to both.

The impression which we have necessarily been long in describing, Lucy felt in the glance of a moment, and had no

sooner encountered the keen black eyes of the stranger than her own were bent on the ground with a mixture of bashful embarrassment and fear. Yet there was a necessity to speak, or at least she thought so, and in a fluttered accent she began to mention her wonderful escape, in which she was sure that the stranger must, under Heaven, have been her father's protector and her own.

He seemed to shrink from her expressions of gratitude, while he replied abruptly, "I leave you, madam," the deep melody of his voice rendered powerful, but not harsh, by something like a severity of tone—"I leave you to the protection of those to whom it is possible you may have this day been a guardian angel."

Lucy was surprised at the ambiguity of his language, and, with a feeling of artless and unaffected gratitude, began to deprecate the idea of having intended to give her deliverer any offence, as if such a thing had been possible. "I have been unfortunate," she said, "in endeavoring to express my thanks—I am sure it must be so, though I cannot recollect what I said; but would you but stay till my father—till the Lord Keeper comes; would you only permit him to pay you his thanks, and to inquire your name?"

"My name is unnecessary," answered the stranger; "your father—I would rather say Sir William Ashton—will learn it soon enough, for all the pleasure it is likely to afford him."

"You mistake him," said Lucy, earnestly; "he will be grateful for my sake and for his own. You do not know my father, or you are deceiving me with a story of his safety, when he has already fallen a victim to the fury of that animal."

When she had caught this idea, she started from the ground and endeavored to press towards the avenue in which the accident had taken place, while the stranger, though he seemed to hesitate between the desire to assist and the wish to leave her, was obliged, in common humanity, to oppose her both by entreaty and action.

"On the word of a gentleman, madam, I tell you the truth; your father is in perfect safety; you will expose yourself to injury if you venture back where the herd of wild cattle grazed. If you will go"—for, having once adopted the idea that her father was still in danger, she pressed forward in spite of him—"if you *will* go, accept my arm, though I am not perhaps the person who can with most propriety offer you support."

But, without heeding this intimation, Lucy took him at his word. "O, if you be a man," she said—"if you be a gentleman, assist me to find my father! You shall not leave me—you must go with me; he is dying perhaps while we are talking here!"

Then, without listening to excuse or apology, and holding fast by the stranger's arm, though unconscious of anything save the support which it gave, and without which she could not have moved, mixed with a vague feeling of preventing his escape from her, she was urging, and almost dragging, him forward when Sir William Ashton came up, followed by the female attendant of blind Alice, and by two wood-cutters, whom he had summoned from their occupation to his assistance. His joy at seeing his daughter safe overcame the surprise with which he would at another time have beheld her hanging as familiarly on the arm of a stranger as she might have done upon his own.

"Lucy, my dear Lucy, are you safe?—are you well?" were the only words that broke from him as he embraced her in ecstasy.

"I am well, sir, thank God! and still more that I see you so; but this gentleman," she said, quitting his arm and shrinking from him, "what must he think of me?" and her eloquent blood, flushing over neck and brow, spoke how much she was ashamed of the freedom with which she had craved, and even compelled, his assistance.

"This gentleman," said Sir William Ashton, "will, I trust, not regret the trouble we have given him, when I assure him of the gratitude of the Lord Keeper for the greatest service which one man ever rendered to another—for the life of my child—for my own life, which he has saved by his bravery and presence of mind. He will, I am sure, permit us to request——"

"Request nothing of ME, my lord," said the stranger, in a stern and peremptory tone; "I am the Master of Ravenswood."

There was a dead pause of surprise, not unmixed with less pleasant feelings. The Master wrapped himself in his cloak, made a haughty inclination towards Lucy, muttering a few words of courtesy, as indistinctly heard as they seemed to be reluctantly uttered, and, turning from them, was immediately lost in the thicket.

"The Master of Ravenswood!" said the Lord Keeper, when he had recovered his momentary astonishment. "Hasten after him—stop him—beg him to speak to me for a single moment."

The two foresters accordingly set off in pursuit of the stranger. They speedily reappeared, and, in an embarrassed and awkward manner, said the gentleman would not return.

The Lord Keeper took one of the fellows aside, and questioned him more closely what the Master of Ravenswood had said.

"He just said he wadna come back," said the man, with the caution of a prudent Scotchman, who cared not to be the bearer of an unpleasant errand.

"He said something more, sir," said the Lord Keeper, "and I insist on knowing what it was."

"Why, then, my lord," said the man, looking down, "he said—— But it wad be nae pleasure to your lordship to hear it, for I dare say the Master meant nae ill."

"That's none of your concern, sir; I desire to hear the very words."

"Weel, then," replied the man, "he said, 'Tell Sir William Ashton that the next time he and I forgather, he will not be half sae blithe of our meeting as of our parting.'"

"Very well, sir," said the Lord Keeper, "I believe he alludes to a wager we have on our hawks; it is a matter of no consequence."

He turned to his daughter, who was by this time so much recovered as to be able to walk home. But the effect, which the various recollections connected with a scene so terrific made upon a mind which was susceptible in an extreme degree, was more permanent than the injury which her nerves had sustained. Visions of terror, both in sleep and in waking reveries, recalled to her the form of the furious animal, and the dreadful bellow with which he accompanied his career; and it was always the image of the Master of Ravenswood, with his native nobleness of countenance and form, that seemed to interpose betwixt her and assured death. It is, perhaps, at all times dangerous for a young person to suffer recollection to dwell repeatedly, and with too much complacency, on the same individual; but in Lucy's situation it was almost unavoidable. She had never happened to see a young man of mien and features so romantic and so striking as young Ravenswood; but had she seen a hundred his equals or his superiors in those particulars, no one else could have been linked to her heart by the strong associations of remembered danger and escape, of gratitude, wonder, and curiosity. I say curiosity, for it is likely that the singularly restrained and unaccommodating manners of the Master of

Ravenswood, so much at variance with the natural expression of his features and grace of his deportment, as they excited wonder by the contrast, had their effect in riveting her attention to the recollection. She knew little of Ravenswood, or the disputes which had existed betwixt her father and his, and perhaps could in her gentleness of mind hardly have comprehended the angry and bitter passions which they had engendered. But she knew that he was come of noble stem; was poor, though descended from the noble and the wealthy; and she felt that she could sympathize with the feelings of a proud mind, which urged him to recoil from the proffered gratitude of the new proprietors of his father's house and domains. Would he have equally shunned their acknowledgments and avoided their intimacy, had her father's request been urged more mildly, less abruptly, and softened with the grace which women so well know how to throw into their manner, when they mean to mediate betwixt the headlong passions of the ruder sex? This was a perilous question to ask her own mind—perilous both in the idea and in its consequences.

Lucy Ashton, in short, was involved in those mazes of the imagination which are most dangerous to the young and the sensitive. Time, it is true, absence, change of scene and new faces, might probably have destroyed the illusion in her instance, as it has done in many others; but her residence remained solitary, and her mind without those means of dissipating her pleasing visions. This solitude was chiefly owing to the absence of Lady Ashton, who was at this time in Edinburgh, watching the progress of some state-intrigue; the Lord Keeper only received society out of policy or ostentation, and was by nature rather reserved and unsociable; and thus no cavalier appeared to rival or to obscure the ideal picture of chivalrous excellence which Lucy had pictured to herself in the Master of Ravenswood.

While Lucy indulged in these dreams, she made frequent visits to old blind Alice, hoping it would be easy to lead her to talk on the subject which at present she had so imprudently admitted to occupy so large a portion of her thoughts. But Alice did not in this particular gratify her wishes and expectations. She spoke readily, and with pathetic feeling, concerning the family in general, but seemed to observe an especial and cautious silence on the subject of the present representative. The little she said of him was not altogether so favorable as Lucy had anticipated. She hinted that he was of a stern and unforgiving character, more ready to resent

than to pardon injuries; and Lucy combined, with great alarm, the hints which she now dropped of these dangerous qualities with Alice's advice to her father, so emphatically given, "to beware of Ravenswood."

But that very Ravenswood, of whom such unjust suspicions had been entertained, had, almost immediately after they had been uttered, confuted them by saving at once her father's life and her own. Had he nourished such black revenge as Alice's dark hints seemed to indicate, no deed of active guilt was necessary to the full gratification of that evil passion. He needed but to have withheld for an instant his indispensable and effective assistance, and the object of his resentment must have perished, without any direct aggression on his part, by a death equally fearful and certain. She conceived, therefore, that some secret prejudice, or the suspicions incident to age and misfortune, had led Alice to form conclusions injurious to the character, and irreconcilable both with the generous conduct and noble features, of the Master of Ravenswood. And in this belief Lucy reposed her hope, and went on weaving her enchanted web of fairy tissue, as beautiful and transient as the film of the gossamer when it is pearled with the morning dew and glimmering to the sun.

Her father, in the mean while, as well as the Master of Ravenswood, were making reflections, as frequent though more solid than those of Lucy, upon the singular event which had taken place. The Lord Keeper's first task, when he returned home, was to ascertain by medical advice that his daughter had sustained no injury from the dangerous and alarming situation in which she had been placed. Satisfied on this topic, he proceeded to revise the memoranda which he had taken down from the mouth of the person employed to interrupt the funeral service of the late Lord Ravenswood. Bred to casuistry, and well accustomed to practise the ambidexter ingenuity of the bar, it cost him little trouble to soften the features of the tumult which he had been at first so anxious to exaggerate. He preached to his colleagues of the privy council the necessity of using conciliatory measures with young men, whose blood and temper were hot, and their experience of life limited. He did not hesitate to attribute some censure to the conduct of the officer, as having been unnecessarily irritating.

These were the contents of his public dispatches. The letters which he wrote to those private friends into whose management the matter was likely to fall were of a yet more favorable tenor. He represented that lenity in this case would

be equally politic and popular, whereas, considering the high respect with which the rites of interment are regarded in Scotland, any severity exercised against the Master of Ravenswood for protecting those of his father from interruption, would be on all sides most unfavorably construed. And, finally, assuming the language of a generous and high-spirited man, he made it his particular request that this affair should be passed over without severe notice. He alluded with delicacy to the predicament in which he himself stood with young Ravenswood, as having succeeded in the long train of litigation by which the fortunes of that noble house had been so much reduced, and confessed it would be most peculiarly acceptable to his own feelings, could he find means in some sort to counterbalance the disadvantages which he had occasioned the family, though only in the prosecution of his just and lawful rights. He therefore made it his particular and personal request that the matter should have no farther consequences, and insinuated a desire that he himself should have the merit of having put a stop to it by his favorable report and intercession. It was particularly remarkable that, contrary to his uniform practice, he made no special communication to Lady Ashton upon the subject of the tumult; and although he mentioned the alarm which Lucy had received from one of the wild cattle, yet he gave no detailed account of an incident so interesting and terrible.

There was much surprise among Sir William Ashton's political friends and colleagues on receiving letters of a tenor so unexpected. On comparing notes together, one smiled, one put up his eyebrows, a third nodded acquiescence in the general wonder, and a fourth asked if they were sure these were *all* the letters the Lord Keeper had written on the subject. "It runs strangely in my mind, my lords, that none of these advices contain the root of the matter."

But no secret letters of a contrary nature had been received, although the question seemed to imply the possibility of their existence.

"Well," said an old gray-headed statesman, who had contrived, by shifting and trimming, to maintain his post at the steerage through all the changes of course which the vessel had held for thirty years, "I thought Sir William would hae verified the auld Scottish saying, 'As soon comes the lamb's skin to market as the auld tup's.'"

"We must please him after his own fashion," said another, "though it be an unlooked-for one."

"A wilful man maun hae his way," answered the old counsellor.

"The Keeper will rue this before year and day are out," said a third; "the Master of Ravenswood is the lad to wind him a pirn."

"Why, what would you do, my lords, with the poor young fellow?" said a noble Marquis present. "The Lord Keeper has got all his estates; he has not a cross to bless himself with."

On which the ancient Lord Turntippet replied,

"If he hasna gear to fine,
He has shins to pine.

And that was our way before the Revolution: *Luitur cum persona, qui luere non potest cum crumena.* Hegh, my lords, that's gude law Latin."

"I can see no motive," replied the Marquis, "that any noble lord can have for urging this matter farther; let the Lord Keeper have the power to deal in it as he pleases."

"Agree, agree—remit to the Lord Keeper, with any other person for fashion's sake—Lord Hirplehooly, who is bedridden—one to be a quorum. Make your entry in the minutes, Mr. Clerk. And now, my lords, there is that young scattergood the Laird of Bucklaw's fine to be disponed upon. I suppose it goes to my Lord Treasurer?"

"Shame be in my meal-poke, then," exclaimed Lord Turntippet, "and your hand aye in the nook of it! I had set that down for a bye-bit between meals for mysell."

"To use one of your favorite saws, my lord," replied the Marquis, "you are like the miller's dog, that licks his lips before the bag is untied: the man is not fined yet."

"But that costs but twa skarts of a pen," said Lord Turntippet; "and surely there is nae noble lord that will presume to say that I, wha hae complied wi' a' compliances, taen all manner of tests, abjured all that was to be abjured, and sworn a' that was to be sworn, for these thirty years bye-past, sticking fast by my duty to the state through good report and bad report, shouldna hae something now and then to synd my mouth wi' after sic drouthy wark? Eh?"

"It would be very unreasonable indeed, my lord," replied the Marquis, "had we either thought that your lordship's drought was quenchable, or observed anything stick in your throat that required washing down."

And so we close the scene on the privy council of that period.

CHAPTER VI

For this are all these warriors come,
To hear an idle tale;
And o'er our death-accustom'd arms
Shall silly tears prevail?
HENRY MACKENZIE.

ON the evening of the day when the Lord Keeper and his daughter were saved from such imminent peril, two strangers were seated in the most private apartment of a small obscure inn, or rather alehouse, called the Tod's Den [Hole], about three or four [five or six] miles from the Castle of Ravenswood, and as far from the ruinous tower of Wolf's Crag, betwixt which two places it was situated.

One of these strangers was about forty years of age, tall, and thin in the flanks, with an aquiline nose, dark penetrating eyes, and a shrewd but sinister cast of countenance. other was about fifteen years younger, short, stout, ruddy-faced, and red-haired, with an open, resolute, and cheerful eye, to which careless and fearless freedom and inward daring gave fire and expression, notwithstanding its light gray color. A stoup of wine (for in those days it was served out from the cask in pewter flagons) was placed on the table, and each had his quaigh or bicker before him. But there was little appearance of conviviality. With folded arms and looks of anxious expectation, they eyed each other in silence, each wrapped in his own thoughts, and holding no communication with his neighbor. At length the younger broke silence by exclaiming, "What the foul fiend can detain the Master so long? He must have miscarried in his enterprise. Why did you dissuade me from going with him?"

"One man is enough to right his own wrong," said the taller and older personage; "we venture our lives for him in coming thus far on such an errand."

"You are but a craven after all, Craigengelt," answered the younger, "and that's what many folk have thought you before now."

"But what none has dared to tell me," said Craigengelt, laying his hand on the hilt of his sword; "and, but that I

hold a hasty man no better than a fool, I would——" he paused for his companion's answer.

"*Would* you ?" said the other, coolly ; "and why do you not then ?"

Craigengelt drew his cutlass an inch or two, and then returned it with violence into the scabbard—"Because there is a deeper stake to be played for than the lives of twenty hare-brained gowks like you."

"You are right there," said his companion, "for if it were not that these forfeitures, and that last fine that the old driveller Turntippet is gaping for, and which, I dare say, is laid on by this time, have fairly driven me out of house and home, I were a coxcomb and a cuckoo to boot to trust your fair promises of getting me a commission in the Irish brigade. What have I to do with the Irish brigade ? I am a plain Scotchman, as my father was before me ; and my grandaunt, Lady Girnington, cannot live forever."

"Ay, Bucklaw," observed Craigengelt, "but she may live for many a long day ; and for your father, he had land and living, kept himself close from wadsetters and money-lenders, paid each man his due, and lived on his own."

"And whose fault is it that I have not done so too ?" said Bucklaw—"whose but the devil's and yours, and such-like as you, that have led me to the far end of a fair estate ? And now I shall be obliged, I suppose, to shelter and shift about like yourself : live one week upon a line of secret intelligence from Saint Germains ; another upon a report of a rising in the Highlands ; get my breakfast and morning draught of sack from old Jacobite ladies, and give them locks of my old wig for the Chevalier's hair ; second my friend in his quarrel till he comes to the field, and then flinch from him lest so important a political agent should perish from the way. All this I must do for bread, besides calling myself a captain !"

"You think you are making a fine speech now," said Craigengelt, "and showing much wit at my expense. Is starving or hanging better than the life I am obliged to lead, because the present fortunes of the king cannot sufficiently support his envoys ?"

"Starving is honester, Craigengelt, and hanging is like to be the end on't. But what you mean to make of this poor fellow Ravenswood, I know not. He has no money left, any more than I ; his lands are all pawned and pledged, and the interest eats up the rents, and is not satisfied, and what do you hope to make by meddling in his affairs ?"

"Content yourself, Bucklaw; I know my business," replied Craigengelt. "Besides that his name, and his father's services in 1689, will make such an acquisition sound well both at Versailles and Saint Germains, you will also please be informed that the Master of Ravenswood is a very different kind of a young fellow from you. He has parts and address, as well as courage and talents, and will present himself abroad like a young man of head as well as heart, who knows something more than the speed of a horse or the flight of a hawk. I have lost credit of late, by bringing over no one that had sense to know more than how to unharbor a stag, or take and reclaim an eyas. The Master has education, sense, and penetration."

"And yet is not wise enough to escape the tricks of a kidnapper, Craigengelt?" replied the younger man. "But don't be angry; you know you will not fight, and so it is as well to leave your hilt in peace and quiet, and tell me in sober guise how you drew the Master into your confidence?"

"By flattering his love of vengeance, Bucklaw," answered Craigengelt. "He has always distrusted me; but I watched my time, and struck while his temper was red-hot with the sense of insult and of wrong. He goes now to expostulate, as he says, and perhaps thinks, with Sir William Ashton. I say, that if they meet, and the lawyer puts him to his defence, the Master will kill him; for he had that sparkle in his eye which never deceives you when you would read a man's purpose. At any rate, he will give him such a bullying as will be construed into an assault on a privy councillor; so there will be a total breach betwixt him and government. Scotland will be too hot for him; France will gain him; and we will all set sail together in the French brig 'L'Espoir,' which is hovering for us off Eyemouth."

"Content am I," said Bucklaw; "Scotland has little left that I care about; and if carrying the Master with us will get us a better reception in France, why, so be it, a God's name. I doubt our own merits will procure us slender preferment; and I trust he will send a ball through the Keeper's head before he joins us. One or two of these scoundrel statesmen should be shot once a year, just to keep the others on their good behavior."

"That is very true," replied Craigengelt; "and it reminds me that I must go and see that our horses have been fed, and are in readiness; for, should such deed be done, it will be no time for grass to grow beneath their heels." He proceeded

as far as the door, then turned back with a look of earnestness, and said to Bucklaw, "Whatever should come of this business, I am sure you will do me the justice to remember that I said nothing to the Master which could imply my accession to any act of violence which he may take it into his head to commit."

"No, no, not a single word like accession," replied Bucklaw; "you know too well the risk belonging to these two terrible words, 'art and part.'" Then, as if to himself, he recited the following lines:

> "The dial spoke not, but it made shrewd signs,
> And pointed full upon the stroke of murder."

"What is that you are talking to yourself?" said Craigengelt, turning back with some anxiety.

"Nothing, only two lines I have heard upon the stage," replied his companion.

"Bucklaw," said Craigengelt, "I sometimes think you should have been a stage-player yourself; all is fancy and frolic with you."

"I have often thought so myself," said Bucklaw. "I believe it would be safer than acting with you in the Fatal Conspiracy. But away, play your own part, and look after the horses like a groom as you are. A play-actor—a stage-player!" he repeated to himself; "that would have deserved a stab, but that Craigengelt's a coward. And yet I should like the profession well enough. Stay, let me see; ay, I would come out in *Alexander*—

> "'Thus from the grave I rise to save my love,
> Draw all your swords, and quick as lightning move.
> When I rush on, sure none will dare to stay;
> 'Tis love commands, and glory leads the way.'"

As with a voice of thunder, and his hand upon his sword, Bucklaw repeated the ranting couplets of poor Lee, Craigengelt re-entered with a face of alarm.

"We are undone, Bucklaw! The Master's led horse has cast himself over his halter in the stable, and is dead lame. His hackney will be set up with the day's work, and now he has no fresh horse; he will never get off."

"Egad, there will be no moving with the speed of lightning this bout," said Bucklaw, dryly. "But stay, you can give him yours."

"What! and be taken myself? I thank you for the proposal," said Craigengelt.

"Why," replied Bucklaw, "if the Lord Keeper should have met with a mischance, which for my part I cannot suppose, for the Master is not the lad to shoot an old and unarmed man—but *if* there should have been a fray at the Castle, you are neither art nor part in it, you know, so have nothing to fear."

"True, true," answered the other, with embarrassment; "but consider my commission from Saint Germains."

"Which many men think is a commission of your own making, noble Captain. Well, if you will not give him your horse, why, d—n it, he must have mine."

"Yours?" said Craigengelt.

"Ay, mine," repeated Bucklaw; "it shall never be said that I agreed to back a gentleman in a little affair of honor, and neither helped him on with it nor off from it."

"You will give him your horse? and have you considered the loss?"

"Loss! why, Gray Gilbert cost me twenty Jacobuses, that's true; but then his hackney is worth something, and his Black Moor is worth twice as much were he sound, and I know how to handle him. Take a fat sucking mastiff whelp, flay and bowel him, stuff the body full of black and gray snails, roast a reasonable time, and baste with oil of spikenard, saffron, cinnamon, and honey, anoint with the dripping, working it in——"

"Yes, Bucklaw; but in the mean while, before the sprain is cured, nay, before the whelp is roasted, you will be caught and hung. Depend on it, the chase will be hard after Ravenswood. I wish we had made our place of rendezvous nearer to the coast."

"On my faith, then," said Bucklaw, "I had best go off just now, and leave my horse for him. Stay—stay, he comes: I hear a horse's feet."

"Are you sure there is only one?" said Craigengelt. "I fear there is a chase; I think I hear three or four galloping together. I am sure I hear more horses than one."

"Pooh, pooh, it is the wench of the house clattering to the well in her pattens. By my faith, Captain, you should give up both your captainship and your secret service, for you are as easily scared as a wild goose. But here comes the Master alone, and looking as gloomy as a night in November."

The Master of Ravenswood entered the room accordingly,

his cloak muffled around him, his arms folded, his looks stern, and at the same time dejected. He flung his cloak from him as he entered, threw himself upon a chair, and appeared sunk in a profound reverie.

"What has happened? What have you done?" was hastily demanded by Craigengelt and Bucklaw in the same moment.

"Nothing," was the short and sullen answer.

"Nothing! and left us, determined to call the old villain to account for all the injuries that you, we, and the country have received at his hand? Have you seen him?"

"I have," replied the Master of Ravenswood.

"Seen him—and come away without settling scores which have been so long due?" said Bucklaw; "I would not have expected that at the hand of the Master of Ravenswood."

"No matter what you expected," replied Ravenswood; "it is not to you, sir, that I shall be disposed to render any reason for my conduct."

"Patience, Bucklaw," said Craigengelt, interrupting his companion, who seemed about to make an angry reply. "The Master has been interrupted in his purpose by some accident; but he must excuse the anxious curiosity of friends who are devoted to his cause like you and me."

"Friends, Captain Craigengelt!" retorted Ravenswood, haughtily; "I am ignorant what familiarity has passed betwixt us to entitle you to use that expression. I think our friendship amounts to this, that we agreed to leave Scotland together so soon as I should have visited the alienated mansion of my fathers, and had an interview with its present possessor—I will not call him proprietor."

"Very true, Master," answered Bucklaw; "and as we thought you had a mind to do something to put your neck in jeopardy, Craigie and I very courteously agreed to tarry for you, although ours might run some risk in consequence. As to Craigie, indeed, it does not very much signify: he had gallows written on his brow in the hour of his birth; but I should not like to discredit my parentage by coming to such an end in another man's cause."

"Gentlemen," said the Master of Ravenswood, "I am sorry if I have occasioned you any inconvenience, but I must claim the right of judging what is best for my own affairs, without rendering explanations to any one. I have altered my mind, and do not design to leave the country this season."

"Not to leave the country, Master!" exclaimed Craigen-

gelt. "Not to go over, after all the trouble and expense I have incurred—after all the risk of discovery, and the expense of freight and demurrage!"

"Sir," replied the Master of Ravenswood, "when I designed to leave this country in this haste, I made use of your obliging offer to procure me means of conveyance; but I do not recollect that I pledged myself to go off, if I found occasion to alter my mind. For your trouble on my account, I am sorry, and I thank you; your expense," he added, putting his hand into his pocket, "admits a more solid compensation: freight and demurrage are matters with which I am unacquainted, Captain Craigengelt, but take my purse and pay yourself according to your own conscience." And accordingly he tendered a purse with some gold in it to the *soi-disant* captain.

But here Bucklaw interposed in his turn. "Your fingers, Craigie, seem to itch for that same piece of green network," said he; "but I make my vow to God, that if they offer to close upon it, I will chop them off with my whinger. Since the Master has changed his mind, I suppose we need stay here no longer; but in the first place I beg leave to tell him——"

"Tell him anything you will," said Craigengelt, "if you will first allow me to state the inconveniences to which he will expose himself by quitting our society, to remind him of the obstacles to his remaining here, and of the difficulties attending his proper introduction at Versailles and Saint Germains without the countenance of those who have established useful connections."

"Besides forfeiting the friendship," said Bucklaw, "of at least one man of spirit and honor."

"Gentlemen," said Ravenswood, "permit me once more to assure you that you have been pleased to attach to our temporary connection more importance than I ever meant that it should have. When I repair to foreign courts, I shall not need the introduction of an intriguing adventurer, nor is it necessary for me to set value on the friendship of a hot-headed bully." With these words, and without waiting for an answer, he left the apartment, remounted his horse, and was heard to ride off.

"Mortbleu!" said Captain Craigengelt, "my recruit is lost!"

"Ay, Captain," said Bucklaw, "the salmon is off with hook and all. But I will after him, for I have had more of his insolence than I can well digest."

Craigengelt offered to accompany him; but Bucklaw replied, "No, no, Captain, keep you the cheek of the chimney-nook till I come back; it's good sleeping in a haill skin.

"'Little kens the auld wife that sits by the fire,
How cauld the wind blaws in hurle-burle swire.'"

And singing as he went, he left the apartment.

CHAPTER VII

Now, Billy Bewick, keep good heart,
And of thy talking let me be;
But if thou art a man, as I am sure thou art,
Come over the dike and fight with me.

Old Ballad.

THE Master of Ravenswood had mounted the ambling hackney which he before rode, on finding the accident which had happened to his led horse, and, for the animal's ease, was proceeding at a slow pace from the Tod's Den towards his old tower of Wolf's Crag,* when he heard the galloping of a horse behind him, and, looking back, perceived that he was pursued by young Bucklaw, who had been delayed a few minutes in the pursuit by the irresistible temptation of giving the hostler at the Tod's Den some recipe for treating the lame horse. This brief delay he had made up by hard galloping, and now overtook the Master where the road traversed a waste moor. "Halt, sir," cried Bucklaw; "I am no political agent—no Captain Craigengelt, whose life is too important to be hazarded in defence of his honor. I am Frank Hayston of Bucklaw, and no man injures me by word, deed, sign, or look, but he must render me an account of it."

"This is all very well, Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw," replied the Master of Ravenswood, in a tone the most calm and indifferent; "but I have no quarrel with you, and desire to have none. Our roads homeward, as well as our roads through life, lie in different directions; there is no occasion for us crossing each other."

"Is there not?" said Bucklaw, impetuously. "By Heaven! but I say that there is, though: you called us intriguing adventurers."

"Be correct in your recollection, Mr. Hayston; it was to your companion only I applied that epithet, and you know him to be no better."

"And what then? He was my companion for the time, and no man shall insult my companion, right or wrong, while he is in my company."

* See Introduction to *Chronicles of the Canongate* (*Laing*).

"Then, Mr. Hayston," replied Ravenswood, with the same composure, "you should choose your society better, or you are like to have much work in your capacity of their champion. Go home, sir; sleep, and have more reason in your wrath to-morrow."

"Not so, Master, you have mistaken your man; high airs and wise saws shall not carry it off thus. Besides, you termed me bully, and you shall retract the word before we part."

"Faith, scarcely," said Ravenswood, "unless you show me better reason for thinking myself mistaken than you are now producing."

"Then, Master," said Bucklaw, "though I should be sorry to offer it to a man of your quality, if you will not justify your incivility, or retract it, or name a place of meeting, you must here undergo the hard word and the hard blow."

"Neither will be necessary," said Ravenswood; "I am satisfied with what I have done to avoid an affair with you. If you are serious, this place will serve as well as another."

"Dismount then, and draw," said Bucklaw, setting him an example. "I always thought and said you were a pretty man; I should be sorry to report you otherwise."

"You shall have no reason, sir," said Ravenswood, alighting, and putting himself into a posture of defence.

Their swords crossed, and the combat commenced with great spirit on the part of Bucklaw, who was well accustomed to affairs of the kind, and distinguished by address and dexterity at his weapon. In the present case, however, he did not use his skill to advantage; for, having lost temper at the cool and contemptuous manner in which the Master of Ravenswood had long refused, and at length granted, him satisfaction, and urged by his impatience, he adopted the part of an assailant with inconsiderate eagerness. The Master, with equal skill, and much greater composure, remained chiefly on the defensive, and even declined to avail himself of one or two advantages afforded him by the eagerness of his adversary. At length, in a desperate lunge, which he followed with an attempt to close, Bucklaw's foot slipped, and he fell on the short grassy turf on which they were fighting. "Take your life, sir," said the Master of Ravenswood, "and mend it if you can."

"It would be but a cobbled piece of work, I fear," said Bucklaw, rising slowly and gathering up his sword, much less disconcerted with the issue of the combat than could have been expected from the impetuosity of his temper. "I thank you for my life, Master," he pursued. "There is my hand;

I bear no ill-will to you, either for my bad luck or your better swordmanship."

The Master looked steadily at him for an instant, then extended his hand to him. "Bucklaw," he said, "you are a generous fellow, and I have done you wrong. I heartily ask your pardon for the expression which offended you; it was hastily and incautiously uttered, and I am convinced it is totally misapplied."

"Are you indeed, Master?" said Bucklaw, his face resuming at once its natural expression of light-hearted carelessness and audacity; "that is more than I expected of you; for, Master, men say you are not ready to retract your opinions and your language."

"Not when I have well considered them," said the Master.

"Then you are a little wiser than I am, for I always give my friend satisfaction first, and explanation afterwards. If one of us falls, all accounts are settled; if not, men are never so ready for peace as after war. But what does that bawling brat of a boy want?" said Bucklaw. "I wish to Heaven he had come a few minutes sooner! and yet it must have been ended some time, and perhaps this way is as well as any other."

As he spoke, the boy he mentioned came up, cudgelling an ass, on which he was mounted, to the top of its speed, and sending, like one of Ossian's heroes, his voice before him —"Gentlemen—gentlemen, save yourselves! for the gudewife bade us tell ye there were folk in her house had taen Captain Craigengelt, and were seeking for Bucklaw, and that ye behoved to ride for it."

"By my faith, and that's very true, my man," said Bucklaw; "and there's a silver sixpence for your news, and I would give any man twice as much would tell me which way I should ride."

"That will I, Bucklaw," said Ravenswood; "ride home to Wolf's Crag with me. There are places in the old tower where you might lie hid, were a thousand men to seek you."

"But that will bring you into trouble yourself, Master; and unless you be in the Jacobite scrape already, it is quite needless for me to drag you in."

"Not a whit; I have nothing to fear."

"Then I will ride with you blithely, for, to say the truth, I do not know the rendezvous that Craigie was to guide us to this night; and I am sure that, if he is taken, he will tell all the truth of me, and twenty lies of you, in order to save himself from the withie."

They mounted and rode off in company accordingly, striking off the ordinary road, and holding their way by wild moorish infrequented paths, with which the gentlemen were well acquainted from the exercise of the chase, but through which others would have had much difficulty in tracing their course. They rode for some time in silence, making such haste as the condition of Ravenswood's horse permitted, until night having gradually closed around them, they discontinued their speed, both from the difficulty of discovering their path, and from the hope that they were beyond the reach of pursuit or observation.

"And now that we have drawn bridle a bit," said Bucklaw, "I would fain ask you a question, Master."

"Ask, and welcome," said Ravenswood, "but forgive my not answering it, unless I think proper."

"Well, it is simply this," answered his late antagonist: "What, in the name of old Sathan, could make you, who stand so highly on your reputation, think for a moment of drawing up with such a rogue as Craigengelt, and such a scapegrace as folk call Bucklaw?"

"Simply because I was desperate, and sought desperate associates."

"And what made you break off from us at the nearest?" again demanded Bucklaw.

"Because I had changed my mind," said the Master, "and renounced my enterprise, at least for the present. And now that I have answered your questions fairly and frankly, tell me what makes you associate with Craigengelt, so much beneath you both in birth and in spirit?"

"In plain terms," answered Bucklaw, "because I am a fool, who have gambled away my land in these times. My grandaunt, Lady Girnington, has taen a new tack of life, I think, and I could only hope to get something by a change of government. Craigie was a sort of gambling acquaintance; he saw my condition, and, as the devil is always at one's elbow, told me fifty lies about his credentials from Versailles, and his interest at Saint Germains, promised me a captain's commission at Paris, and I have been ass enough to put my thumb under his belt. I dare say, by this time, he has told a dozen pretty stories of me to the government. And this is what I have got by wine, women, and dice, cocks, dogs, and horses."

"Yes, Bucklaw," said the Master, "you have indeed nourished in your bosom the snakes that are now stinging you."

"That's home as well as true, Master," replied his companion; "but, by your leave, you have nursed in your bosom one great goodly snake that has swallowed all the rest, and is as sure to devour you as my half-dozen are to make a meal on all that's left of Bucklaw, which is but what lies between bonnet and boot-heel."

"I must not," answered the Master of Ravenswood, "challenge the freedom of speech in which I have set example. What, to speak without a metaphor, do you call this monstrous passion which you charge me with fostering?"

"Revenge, my good sir—revenge; which, if it be as gentlemanlike a sin as wine and wassail, with their *et ceteras*, is equally unchristian, and not so bloodless. It is better breaking a parkpale to watch a doe or damsel than to shoot an old man."

"I deny the purpose," said the Master of Ravenswood. "On my soul, I had no such intention; I meant but to confront the oppressor ere I left my native land, and upbraid him with his tyranny and its consequences. I would have stated my wrongs so that they would have shaken his soul within him."

"Yes," answered Bucklaw, "and he would have collared you, and cried 'help,' and then you would have shaken the soul *out* of him, I suppose. Your very look and manner would have frightened the old man to death."

"Consider the provocation," answered Ravenswood—"consider the ruin and death procured and caused by his hard-hearted cruelty—an ancient house destroyed, an affectionate father murdered! Why, in our old Scottish days, he that sat quiet under such wrongs would have been held neither fit to back a friend nor face a foe."

"Well, Master, I am glad to see that the devil deals as cunningly with other folk as he deals with me; for whenever I am about to commit any folly, he persuades me it is the most necessary, gallant, gentlemanlike thing on earth, and I am up to saddlegirths in the bog before I see that the ground is soft. And you, Master, might have turned out a murd——a homicide, just out of pure respect for your father's memory."

"There is more sense in your language, Bucklaw," replied the Master, "than might have been expected from your conduct. It is too true, our vices steal upon us in forms outwardly as fair as those of the demons whom the superstitious represent as intriguing with the human race, and are not discovered in their native hideousness until we have clasped them in our arms."

"But we may throw them from us, though," said Bucklaw, "and that is what I shall think of doing one of these days—that is, when old Lady Girnington dies."

"Did you ever hear the expression of the English divine?" said Ravenswood—"'Hell is paved with good intentions,'—as much as to say, they are more often formed than executed."

"Well," replied Bucklaw, "but I will begin this blessed night, and have determined not to drink above one quart of wine, unless your claret be of extraordinary quality."

"You will find little to tempt you at Wolf's Crag," said the Master. "I know not that I can promise you more than the shelter of my roof; all, and more than all, our stock of wine and provisions was exhausted at the late occasion."

"Long may it be ere provision is needed for the like purpose," answered Bucklaw; "but you should not drink up the last flask at a dirge; there is ill luck in that."

"There is ill luck, I think, in whatever belongs to me," said Ravenswood. "But yonder is Wolf's Crag, and whatever it still contains is at your service."

The roar of the sea had long announced their approach to the cliffs, on the summit of which, like the nest of some sea-eagle, the founder of the fortalice had perched his eyrie. The pale moon, which had hitherto been contending with flitting clouds, now shone out, and gave them a view of the solitary and naked tower, situated on a projecting cliff that beetled on the German Ocean. On three sides the rock was precipitous; on the fourth, which was that towards the land, it had been originally fenced by an artificial ditch and drawbridge, but the latter was broken down and ruinous, and the former had been in part filled up, so as to allow passage for a horseman into the narrow courtyard, encircled on two sides with low offices and stables, partly ruinous, and closed on the landward front by a low embattled wall, while the remaining side of the quadrangle was occupied by the tower itself, which, tall and narrow, and built of a grayish stone, stood glimmering in the moonlight, like the sheeted spectre of some huge giant. A wilder or more disconsolate dwelling it was perhaps difficult to conceive. The sombrous and heavy sound of the billows, successively dashing against the rocky beach at a profound distance beneath, was to the ear what the landscape was to the eye—a symbol of unvaried and monotonous melancholy, not unmingled with horror.

Although the night was not far advanced, there was no sign of living inhabitant about this forlorn abode, excepting that one, and only one, of the narrow and stanchelled win-

dows which appeared at irregular heights and distances in the walls of the building showed a small glimmer of light.

"There," said Ravenswood, "sits the only male domestic that remains to the house of Ravenswood; and it is well that he does remain there, since otherwise we had little hope to find either light or fire. But follow me cautiously; the road is narrow, and admits only one horse in front."

In effect, the path led along a kind of isthmus, at the peninsular extremity of which the tower was situated, with that exclusive attention to strength and security, in preference to every circumstance of convenience, which dictated to the Scottish barons the choice of their situations, as well as their style of building.

By adopting the cautious mode of approach recommended by the proprietor of this wild hold, they entered the courtyard in safety. But it was long ere the efforts of Ravenswood, though loudly exerted by knocking at the low-browed entrance, and repeated shouts to Caleb to open the gate and admit them, received any answer.

"The old man must be departed," he began to say, "or fallen into some fit; for the noise I have made would have waked the seven sleepers."

At length a timid and hesitating voice replied, "Master —Master of Ravenswood, is it you?"

"Yes, it is I, Caleb; open the door quickly."

"But is it you in very blood and body? For I would sooner face fifty deevils as my master's ghaist, or even his wraith; wherefore, aroint ye, if ye were ten times my master, unless ye come in bodily shape, lith and limb."

"It is I, you old fool," answered Ravenswood, "in bodily shape and alive, save that I am half dead with cold."

The light at the upper window disappeared, and glancing from loophole to loophole in slow succession, gave intimation that the bearer was in the act of descending, with great deliberation, a winding staircase occupying one of the turrets which graced the angles of the old tower. The tardiness of his descent extracted some exclamations of impatience from Ravenswood, and several oaths from his less patient and more mercurial companion. Caleb again paused ere he unbolted the door, and once more asked if they were men of mould that demanded entrance at this time of night.

"Were I near you, you old fool," said Bucklaw, "I would give you sufficient proofs of *my* bodily condition."

"Open the gate, Caleb," said his master, in a more soothing tone, partly from his regard to the ancient and faithful

seneschal, partly perhaps because he thought that angry words would be thrown away, so long as Caleb had a stout iron-clinched oaken door betwixt his person and the speakers.

At length Caleb, with a trembling hand, undid the bars, opened the heavy door, and stood before them, exhibiting his thin gray hairs, bald forehead, and sharp high features, illuminated by a quivering lamp which he held in one hand, while he shaded and protected its flame with the other. The timorous, courteous glance which he threw around him, the effect of the partial light upon his white hair and illumined features, might have made a good painting; but our travellers were too impatient for security against the rising storm to permit them to indulge themselves in studying the picturesque. "Is it you, my dear master?—is it you, yourself, indeed?" exclaimed the old domestic. "I am wae ye suld hae stude waiting at your ain gate; but wha wad hae thought o' seeing ye sae sune, and a strange gentleman with a—— [Here he exclaimed apart, as it were, and to some inmate of the tower, in a voice not meant to be heard by those in the court] Mysie—Mysie, woman! stir for dear life, and get the fire mended; take the auld three-legged stool, or onything that's readiest that will make a lowe. I doubt we are but puirly provided, no expecting ye this some months, when doubtless ye wad hae been received conform till your rank, as gude right is; but natheless——"

"Natheless, Caleb," said the Master, "we must have our horses put up, and ourselves too, the best way we can. I hope you are not sorry to see me sooner than you expected?"

"Sorry, my lord! I am sure ye sall aye be my lord wi' honest folk, as your noble ancestors hae been these three hundred years, and never asked a Whig's leave. Sorry to see the Lord of Ravenswood at ane o' his ain castles! [Then again apart to his unseen associate behind the screen] Mysie, kill the brood-hen without thinking twice on it; let them care that come ahint. No to say it's our best dwelling," he added, turning to Bucklaw; "but just a strength for the Lord of Ravenswood to flee until—that is, no to *flee*, but to retreat until in troublous times, like the present, when it was ill convenient for him to live farther in the country in ony of his better and mair principal manors; but, for its antiquity, maist folk think that the outside of Wolf's Crag is worthy of a large perusal."

"And you are determined we shall have time to make it," said Ravenswood, somewhat amused with the shifts the old man used to detain them without doors until his confederate Mysie had made her preparations within.

"O, never mind the outside of the house, my good friend," said Bucklaw; "let's see the inside, and let our horses see the stable, that's all."

"O yes, sir—ay, sir—unquestionably, sir—my lord and ony of his honorable companions——"

"But our horses, my old friend—our horses; they will be dead-foundered by standing here in the cold after riding hard, and mine is too good to be spoiled; therefore, once more, our horses," exclaimed Bucklaw.

"True—ay—your horses—yes—I will call the grooms;" and sturdily did Caleb roar till the old tower rang again—"John—William—Saunders! The lads are gane out, or sleeping," he observed, after pausing for an answer, which he knew that he had no human chance of receiving. "A' gaes wrang when the Master's out-bye; but I'll take care o' your cattle mysell."

"I think you had better," said Ravenswood, "otherwise I see little chance of their being attended to at all."

"Whisht, my lord—whisht, for God's sake," said Caleb, in an imploring tone, and apart to his master; "if ye dinna regard your ain credit, think on mine; we'll hae hard eneugh wark to mak a decent night o't, wi' a' the lees I can tell."

"Well, well, never mind," said his master; "go to the stable. There is hay and corn, I trust?"

"Ou ay, plenty of hay and corn;" this was uttered boldly and aloud, and, in a lower tone, "there was some half fous o' aits, and some taits o' meadow-hay, left after the burial."

"Very well," said Ravenswood, taking the lamp from his domestic's unwilling hand, "I will show the stranger upstairs myself."

"I canna think o' that, my lord; if ye wad but have five minutes', or ten minutes', or, at maist, a quarter of an hour's patience, and look at the fine moonlight prospect of the Bass and North Berwick Law till I sort the horses, I would marshal ye up, as reason is ye suld be marshalled, your lordship and your honorable visitor. And I hae lockit up the siller candlesticks, and the lamp is not fit——"

"It will do very well in the mean time," said Ravenswood, "and you will have no difficulty for want of light in the stable, for, if I recollect, half the roof is off."

"Very true, my lord," replied the trusty adherent, and with ready wit instantly added, "and the lazy sclater loons have never come to put it on a' this while, your lordship."

"If I were disposed to jest at the calamities of my house," said Ravenswood, as he led the way upstairs, "poor old

Caleb would furnish me with ample means. His passion consists in representing things about our miserable menage, not as they are, but as, in his opinion, they ought to be; and, to say the truth, I have been often diverted with the poor wretch's expedients to supply what he thought was essential for the credit of the family, and his still more generous apologies for the want of those articles for which his ingenuity could discover no substitute. But though the tower is none of the largest, I shall have some trouble without him to find the apartment in which there is a fire."

As he spoke thus, he opened the door of the hall. "Here, at least," he said, "there is neither hearth nor harbor."

It was indeed a scene of desolation. A large vaulted room, the beams of which, combined like those of Westminster Hall, were rudely carved at the extremities, remained nearly in the situation in which it had been left after the entertainment at Allan Lord Ravenswood's funeral. Overturned pitchers, and black-jacks, and pewter stoups, and flagons still cumbered the large oaken table; glasses, those more perishable implements of conviviality, many of which had been voluntarily sacrificed by the guests in their enthusiastic pledges to favorite toasts, strewed the stone floor with their fragments. As for the articles of plate, lent for the purpose by friends and kinsfolk, those had been carefully withdrawn so soon as the ostentatious display of festivity, equally unnecessary and strangely timed, had been made and ended. Nothing, in short, remained that indicated wealth; all the signs were those of recent wastefulness and present desolation. The black cloth hangings, which, on the late mournful occasion, replaced the tattered moth-eaten tapestries, had been partly pulled down, and, dangling from the wall in irregular festoons, disclosed the rough stonework of the building, unsmoothed either by plaster or the chisel. The seats thrown down, or left in disorder, intimated the careless confusion which had concluded the mournful revel. "This room," said Ravenswood, holding up the lamp—"this room, Mr. Hayston, was riotous when it should have been sad; it is a just retribution that it should now be sad when it ought to be cheerful."

They left this disconsolate apartment, and went upstairs, where, after opening one or two doors in vain, Ravenswood led the way into a little matted anteroom, in which, to their great joy, they found a tolerably good fire, which Mysie, by some such expedient as Caleb had suggested, had supplied with a reasonable quantity of fuel. Glad at the heart to see

more of comfort than the castle had yet seemed to offer, Bucklaw rubbed his hands heartily over the fire, and now listened with more complacency to the apologies which the Master of Ravenswood offered. "Comfort," he said, "I cannot provide for you, for I have it not for myself; it is long since these walls have known it, if, indeed, they were ever acquainted with it. Shelter and safety, I think, I can promise you."

"Excellent matters, Master," replied Bucklaw, "and, with a mouthful of food and wine, positively all I can require to-night."

"I fear," said the Master, "your supper will be a poor one; I hear the matter in discussion betwixt Caleb and Mysie. Poor Balderstone is something deaf, among his other accomplishments, so that much of what he means should be spoken aside is overheard by the whole audience, and especially by those from whom he is most anxious to conceal his private manœuvres. Hark!"

They listened, and heard the old domestic's voice in conversation with Mysie to the following effect:

"Just mak the best o't—mak the best o't, woman; it's easy to put a fair face on onything."

"But the auld brood-hen? She'll be as teugh as bow-strings and bend-leather."

"Say ye made a mistake—say ye made a mistake, Mysie," replied the faithful seneschal, in a soothing and undertoned voice; "tak it a' on yoursell; never let the credit o' the house suffer."

"But the brood-hen," remonstrated Mysie—"ou, she's sitting some gate aneath the dais in the hall, and I am feared to gae in in the dark for the bogle; and if I didna see the bogle, I could as ill see the hen, for it's pit-mirk, and there's no another light in the house, save that very blessed lamp whilk the Master has in his ain hand. And if I had the hen, she's to pu', and to draw, and to dress; how can I do that, and them sitting by the only fire we have?"

"Weel, weel, Mysie," said the butler, "bide ye there a wee, and I'll try to get the lamp wiled away frae them."

Accordingly, Caleb Balderstone entered the apartment, little aware that so much of his by-play had been audible there. "Well, Caleb, my old friend, is there any chance of supper?" said the Master of Ravenswood.

"*Chance* of supper, your lordship?" said Caleb, with an emphasis of strong scorn at the implied doubt. "How should there be ony question of that, and us in your lord-

ship's house? Chance of supper, indeed! But ye'll no be for butcher-meat? There's walth o' fat poultry, ready either for spit or brander. The fat capon, Mysie!" he added, calling out as boldly as if such a thing had been in existence.

"Quite unnecessary," said Bucklaw, who deemed himself bound in courtesy to relieve some part of the anxious butler's perplexity, "if you have anything cold, or a morsel of bread."

"The best of bannocks!" exclaimed Caleb, much relieved; "and, for cauld meat, a' that we hae is cauld eneugh, —howbeit, maist of the cauld meat and pastry was gien to the poor folk after the ceremony of interment, as gude reason was; nevertheless——"

"Come, Caleb," said the Master of Ravenswood, "I must cut this matter short. This is the young Laird of Bucklaw; he is under hiding, and therefore, you know——"

"He'll be nae nicer than your lordship's honor, I'se warrant," answered Caleb, cheerfully, with a nod of intelligence; "I am sorry that the gentleman is under distress, but I am blithe that he canna say muckle agane our housekeeping, for I believe his ain pinches may match ours; no that we are pinched, thank God," he added, retracting the admission which he had made in his first burst of joy, "but nae doubt we are waur aff than we hae been, or suld be. And for eating—what signifies telling a lee? there's just the hinder end of the mutton-ham that has been but three times on the table, and the nearer the bane the sweeter, as your honors weel ken; and—there's the heel of the ewe-milk kebbuck, wi' a bit of nice butter, and—and—that's a' that's to trust to." And with great alacrity he produced his slender stock of provisions, and placed them with much formality upon a small round table betwixt the two gentlemen, who were not deterred either by the homely quality or limited quantity of the repast from doing it full justice. Caleb in the mean while waited on them with grave officiousness, as if anxious to make up, by his own respectful assiduity, for the want of all other attendance.

But, alas! how little on such occasions can form, however anxiously and scrupulously observed, supply the lack of substantial fare! Bucklaw, who had eagerly eaten a considerable portion of the thrice-sacked mutton-ham, now began to demand ale.

"I wadna just presume to recommend our ale," said Caleb; "the maut was ill made, and there was awfu' thunner last week; but siccan water as the Tower well has ye'll seldom see, Bucklaw, and that I'se engage for."

"But if your ale is bad, you can let us have some wine," said Bucklaw, making a grimace at the mention of the pure element which Caleb so earnestly recommended.

"Wine!" answered Caleb, undauntedly, "eneugh of wine! It was but twa days syne—wae's me for the cause—there was as much wine drank in this house as would have floated a pinnace. There never was lack of wine at Wolf's Crag."

"Do fetch us some then," said his master, "instead of talking about it." And Caleb boldly departed.

Every expended butt in the old cellar did he set a-tilt, and shake with the desperate expectation of collecting enough of the grounds of claret to fill the large pewter measure which he carried in his hand. Alas! each had been too devoutly drained; and, with all the squeezing and manœuvring which his craft as a butler suggested, he could only collect about half a quart that seemed presentable. Still, however, Caleb was too good a general to renounce the field without a stratagem to cover his retreat. He undauntedly threw down an empty flagon, as if he had stumbled at the entrance of the apartment, called upon Mysie to wipe up the wine that had never been spilled, and placing the other vessel on the table, hoped there was still enough left for their honors. There was indeed; for even Bucklaw, a sworn friend to the grape, found no encouragement to renew his first attack upon the vintage of Wolf's Crag, but contented himself, however reluctantly, with a draught of fair water. Arrangements were now made for his repose; and as the secret chamber was assigned for this purpose, it furnished Caleb with a first-rate and most plausible apology for all deficiencies of furniture, bedding, etc.

"For wha," said he, "would have thought of the secret chaumer being needed? It has not been used since the time of the Gowrie Conspiracy, and I durst never let a woman ken of the entrance to it, or your honor will allow that it wad not hae been a secret chaumer lang."

CHAPTER VIII

The hearth in hall was black and dead,
No board was dight in bower within,
Nor merry bowl nor welcome bed;
"Here's sorry cheer," quoth the Heir of Linne.
Old Ballad.

THE feelings of the prodigal Heir of Linne, as expressed in that excellent old song, when, after dissipating his whole fortune, he found himself the deserted inhabitant of "the lonely lodge," might perhaps have some resemblance to those of the Master of Ravenswood in his deserted mansion of Wolf's Crag. The Master, however, had this advantage over the spendthrift in the legend, that, if he was in similar distress, he could not impute it to his own imprudence. His misery had been bequeathed to him by his father, and, joined to his high blood, and to a title which the courteous might give or the churlish withhold at their pleasure, it was the whole inheritance he had derived from his ancestry.

Perhaps this melancholy yet consolatory reflection crossed the mind of the unfortunate young nobleman with a breathing of comfort. Favorable to calm reflection, as well as to the Muses, the morning, while it dispelled the shades of night, had a composing and sedative effect upon the stormy passions by which the Master of Ravenswood had been agitated on the preceding day. He now felt himself able to analyze the different feelings by which he was agitated, and much resolved to combat and to subdue them. The morning, which had arisen calm and bright, gave a pleasant effect even to the waste moorland view which was seen from the castle on looking to the landward; and the glorious ocean, crisped with a thousand rippling waves of silver, extended on the other side, in awful yet complacent majesty, to the verge of the horizon. With such scenes of calm sublimity the human heart sympathizes even in its most disturbed moods, and deeds of honor and virtue are inspired by their majestic influence.

To seek out Bucklaw in the retreat which he had afforded him was the first occupation of the Master, after he had performed, with a scrutiny unusually severe, the important task

of self-examination. "How now, Bucklaw?" was his morning's salutation—"how like you the couch in which the exiled Earl of Angus once slept in security, when he was pursued by the full energy of a king's resentment?"

"Umph!" returned the sleeper awakened; "I have little to complain of where so great a man was quartered before me, only the mattress was of the hardest, the vault somewhat damp, the rats rather more mutinous than I would have expected from the state of Caleb's larder; and if there had been shutters to that grated window, or a curtain to the bed, I should think it, upon the whole, an improvement in your accommodations."

"It is, to be sure, forlorn enough," said the Master, looking around the small vault; "but if you will rise and leave it, Caleb will endeavor to find you a better breakfast than your supper of last night."

"Pray, let it be no better," said Bucklaw, getting up, and endeavoring to dress himself as well as the obscurity of the place would permit—"let it, I say, be no better, if you mean me to persevere in my proposed reformation. The very recollection of Caleb's beverage has done more to suppress my longing to open the day with a morning draught than twenty sermons would have done. And you, Master, have you been able to give battle valiantly to your bosom-snake? You see I am in the way of smothering my vipers one by one."

"I have commenced the battle, at least, Bucklaw, and I have had a fair vision of an angel who descended to my assistance," replied the Master.

"Woe's me!" said his guest, "no vision can I expect, unless my aunt, Lady Girnington, should betake herself to the tomb; and then it would be the substance of her heritage rather than the appearance of her phantom that I should consider as the support of my good resolutions. But this same breakfast, Master—does the deer that is to make the pasty run yet on foot, as the ballad has it?"

"I will inquire into that matter," said his entertainer; and, leaving the apartment, he went in search of Caleb, whom, after some difficulty, he found in an obscure sort of dungeon, which had been in former times the buttery of the castle. Here the old man was employed busily in the doubtful task of burnishing a pewter flagon until it should take the hue and semblance of silver-plate. "I think it may do—I think it might pass, if they winna bring it ower muckle in the light o' the window!" were the ejaculations which he muttered from time to time, as if to encourage himself in his

undertaking, when he was interrupted by the voice of his master.

"Take this," said the Master of Ravenswood, "and get what is necessary for the family." And with these words he gave to the old butler the purse which had on the preceding evening so narrowly escaped the fangs of Craigengelt.

The old man shook his silvery and thin locks, and looked with an expression of the most heartfelt anguish at his master as he weighed in his hand the slender treasure, and said in a sorrowful voice, "And is this a' that's left?"

"All that is left at present," said the Master, affecting more cheerfulness than perhaps he really felt, "is just the green purse and the wee pickle gowd, as the old song says; but we shall do better one day, Caleb."

"Before that day comes," said Caleb, "I doubt there will be an end of an auld sang, and an auld serving-man to boot. But it disna become me to speak that gate to your honor, and you looking sae pale. Tak back the purse, and keep it to be making a show before company; for if your honor would just tak a bidding, and be whiles taking it out afore folk and putting it up again, there's naebody would refuse us trust, for a' that's come and gane yet."

"But, Caleb," said the Master, "I still intend to leave this country very soon, and desire to do so with the reputation of an honest man, leaving no debt behind me, at least of my own contracting."

"And gude right ye suld gang away as a true man, and so ye shall; for auld Caleb can tak the wyte of whatever is taen on for the house, and then it will be a' just ae man's burden; and I will live just as weel in the tolbooth as out of it, and the credit of the family will be a' safe and sound."

The Master endeavored, in vain, to make Caleb comprehend that the butler's incurring the responsibility of debts in his own person would rather add to than remove the objections which he had to their being contracted. He spoke to a premier too busy in devising ways and means to puzzle himself with refuting the arguments offered against their justice or expediency.

"There's Eppie Sma'trash will trust us for ale," said Caleb to himself—"she has lived a' her life under the family—and maybe wi' a soup brandy; I canna say for wine—she is but a lone woman, and gets her claret by a runlet at a time; but I'll work a wee drap out o' her by fair means or foul. For doos, there's the doocot; there will be poultry amang the tenants, though Luckie Chirnside says she has paid the kain

twice ower. We'll mak shift, an it like your honor—we'll mak shift; keep your heart abune, for the house sall haud its credit as lang as auld Caleb is to the fore."

The entertainment which the old man's exertions of various kinds enabled him to present to the young gentlemen for three or four days was certainly of no splendid description, but it may readily be believed it was set before no critical guests; and even the distresses, excuses, evasions, and shifts of Caleb afforded amusement to the young men, and added a sort of interest to the scrambling and irregular style of their table. They had indeed occasion to seize on every circumstance that might serve to diversify or enliven time, which otherwise passed away so heavily.

Bucklaw, shut out from his usual field-sports and joyous carouses by the necessity of remaining concealed within the walls of the castle, became a joyless and uninteresting companion. When the Master of Ravenswood would no longer fence or play at shovel-board; when he himself had polished to the extremity the coat of his palfrey with brush, curry-comb, and hair-cloth; when he had seen him eat his provender, and gently lie down in his stall, he could hardly help envying the animal's apparent acquiescence in a life so monotonous. "The stupid brute," he said, "thinks neither of the race-ground or the hunting-field, or his green paddock at Bucklaw, but enjoys himself as comfortably when haltered to the rack in this ruinous vault, as if he had been foaled in it; and I, who have the freedom of a prisoner at large, to range through the dungeons of this wretched old tower, can hardly, betwixt whistling and sleeping, contrive to pass away the hour till dinner-time."

And with this disconsolate reflection, he wended his way to the bartizan or battlements of the tower, to watch what objects might appear on the distant moor, or to pelt, with pebbles and pieces of lime, the sea-mews and cormorants which established themselves incautiously within the reach of an idle young man.

Ravenswood, with a mind incalculably deeper and more powerful than that of his companion, had his own anxious subjects of reflection, which wrought for him the same unhappiness that sheer *ennui* and want of occupation inflicted on his companion. The first sight of Lucy Ashton had been less impressive than her image proved to be upon reflection. As the depth and violence of that revengeful passion by which he had been actuated in seeking an interview with the father began to abate by degrees, he looked back on his

conduct towards the daughter as harsh and unworthy towards a female of rank and beauty. Her looks of grateful acknowledgment, her words of affectionate courtesy, had been repelled with something which approached to disdain ; and if the Master of Ravenswood had sustained wrongs at the hand of Sir William Ashton, his conscience told him they had been unhandsomely resented towards his daughter. When his thoughts took this turn of self-reproach, the recollection of Lucy Ashton's beautiful features, rendered yet more interesting by the circumstances in which their meeting had taken place, made an impression upon his mind at once soothing and painful. The sweetness of her voice, the delicacy of her expressions, the vivid glow of her filial affection, embittered his regret at having repulsed her gratitude with rudeness, while, at the same time, they placed before his imagination a picture of the most seducing sweetness.

Even young Ravenswood's strength of moral feeling and rectitude of purpose at once increased the danger of cherishing these recollections, and the propensity to entertain them. Firmly resolved as he was to subdue, if possible, the predominating vice in his character, he admitted with willingness—nay, he summoned up in his imagination—the ideas by which it could be most powerfully counteracted ; and, while he did so, a sense of his own harsh conduct towards the daughter of his enemy naturally induced him, as if by way of recompense, to invest her with more of grace and beauty than perhaps she could actually claim.

Had any one at this period told the Master of Ravenswood that he had so lately vowed vengeance against the whole lineage of him whom he considered, not unjustly, as author of his father's ruin and death, he might at first have repelled the charge as a foul calumny ; yet, upon serious self-examination, he would have been compelled to admit that it had, at one period, some foundation in truth, though, according to the present tone of his sentiments, it was difficult to believe that this had really been the case.

There already existed in his bosom two contradictory passions—a desire to revenge the death of his father, strangely qualified by admiration of his enemy's daughter. Against the former feeling he had struggled, until it seemed to him upon the wane ; against the latter he used no means of resistance, for he did not suspect its existence. That this was actually the case was chiefly evinced by his resuming his resolution to leave Scotland. Yet, though such was his purpose, he remained day after day at Wolf's Crag, without taking measures

for carrying it into execution. It is true, that he had written to one or two kinsmen who resided in a distant quarter of Scotland, and particularly to the Marquis of A——, intimating his purpose ; and when pressed upon the subject by Bucklaw, he was wont to allege the necessity of waiting for their reply, especially that of the Marquis, before taking so decisive a measure.

The Marquis was rich and powerful ; and although he was suspected to entertain sentiments unfavorable to the government established at the Revolution, he had nevertheless address enough to head a party in the Scottish privy council, connected with the High Church faction in England, and powerful enough to menace those to whom the Lord Keeper adhered with a probable subversion of their power. The consulting with a personage of such importance was a plausible excuse, which Ravenswood used to Bucklaw, and probably to himself, for continuing his residence at Wolf's Crag ; and it was rendered yet more so by a general report which began to be current of a probable change of ministers and measures in the Scottish administration. These rumors, strongly asserted by some, and as resolutely denied by others, as their wishes or interest dictated, found their way even to the ruinous Tower of Wolf's Crag, chiefly through the medium of Caleb, the butler, who, among his other excellences, was an ardent politician, and seldom made an excursion from the old fortress to the neighboring village of Wolf's Hope without bringing back what tidings were current in the vicinity.

But if Bucklaw could not offer any satisfactory objections to the delay of the Master in leaving Scotland, he did not the less suffer with impatience the state of inaction to which it confined him ; and it was only the ascendency which his new companion had acquired over him that induced him to submit to a course of life so alien to his habits and inclinations.

"You were wont to be thought a stirring active young fellow, Master," was his frequent remonstrance ; "yet here you seem determined to live on and on like a rat in a hole, with this trifling difference, that the wiser vermin chooses a hermitage where he can find food at least ; but as for us, Caleb's excuses become longer as his diet turns more spare, and I fear we shall realize the stories they tell of the sloth : we have almost eat up the last green leaf on the plant, and have nothing left for it but to drop from the tree and break our necks."

"Do not fear it," said Ravenswood ; "there is a fate watches for us, and we too have a stake in the revolution that is now impending, and which already has alarmed many a bosom."

"What fate—what revolution?" inquired his companion. "We have had one revolution too much already, I think."

Ravenswood interrupted him by putting into his hands a letter.

"O," answered Bucklaw, "my dream's out. I thought I heard Caleb this morning pressing some unfortunate fellow to a drink of cold water, and assuring him it was better for his stomach in the morning than ale or brandy."

"It was my Lord of A——'s courier," said Ravenswood, "who was doomed to experience his ostentatious hospitality, which I believe ended in sour beer and herrings. Read, and you will see the news he has brought us."

"I will as fast as I can," said Bucklaw; "but I am no great clerk, nor does his lordship seem to be the first of scribes."

The reader will peruse, in a few seconds, by the aid of our friend Ballantyne's * types, what took Bucklaw a good half hour in perusal, though assisted by the Master of Ravenswood. The tenor was as follows:

"RIGHT HONORABLE OUR COUSIN,

"Our hearty commendations premised, these come to assure you of the interest which we take in your welfare, and in your purposes towards its augmentation. If we have been less active in showing forth our effective good-will towards you than, as a loving kinsman and blood-relative, we would willingly have desired, we request that you will impute it to lack of opportunity to show our good-liking, not to any coldness of our will. Touching your resolution to travel in foreign parts, as at this time we hold the same little advisable, in respect that your ill-willers may, according to the custom of such persons, impute motives for your journey, whereof, although we know and believe you to be as clear as ourselves, yet natheless their words may find credence in places where the belief in them may much prejudice you, and which we should see with more unwillingness and displeasure than with means of remedy.

"Having thus, as becometh our kindred, given you our poor mind on the subject of your journeying forth of Scotland, we would willingly add reasons of weight, which might materially advantage you and your father's house, thereby to determine you to abide at Wolf's Crag, until this harvest season shall be passed over. But what sayeth the proverb, *verbum sapienti*—a word is more to him that hath wisdom than a sermon to a fool. And albeit we have written this poor

scroll with our own hand, and are well assured of the fidelity of our messenger, as him that is many ways bounden to us, yet so it is, that sliddery ways crave wary walking, and that we may not peril upon paper matters which we would gladly impart to you by word of mouth. Wherefore, it was our purpose to have prayed you heartily to come to this our barren Highland country to kill a stag, and to treat of the matters which we are now more painfully inditing to you anent. But commodity does not serve at present for such our meeting, which, therefore, shall be deferred until sic time as we may in all mirth rehearse those things whereof we now keep silence. Meantime, we pray you to think that we are, and will still be, your good kinsman and well-wisher, waiting but for times of whilk we do, as it were, entertain a twilight prospect, and appear and hope to be also your effectual well-doer. And in which hope we heartily write ourself,

"Right Honorable,

"Your loving cousin,

"A——.

"Given from our poor house of B——," etc.

Superscribed—"For the right honorable, and our honored kinsman, the Master of Ravenswood—These, with haste, haste, post haste—ride and run until these be delivered."

"What think you of this epistle, Bucklaw?" said the Master, when his companion had hammered out all the sense, and almost all the words of which it consisted.

"Truly, that the Marquis's meaning is as great a riddle as his manuscript. He is really in much need of *Wit's Interpreter*, or the *Complete Letter-Writer*, and were I you, I would send him a copy by the bearer. He writes you very kindly to remain wasting your time and your money in this vile, stupid, oppressed country, without so much as offering you the countenance and shelter of his house. In my opinion, he has some scheme in view in which he supposes you can be useful, and he wishes to keep you at hand, to make use of you when it ripens, reserving the power of turning you adrift, should his plot fail in the concoction."

"His plot! Then you suppose it is a treasonable business," answered Ravenswood.

"What else can it be?" replied Bucklaw; "the Marquis has been long suspected to have an eye to Saint Germains."

"He should not engage me rashly in such an adventure," said Ravenswood; "when I recollect the times of the first and

second Charles, and of the last James, truly I see little reason that, as a man or a patriot, I should draw my sword for their descendants."

"Humph!" replied Bucklaw; "so you have set yourself down to mourn over the crop-eared dogs whom honest Claver'se treated as they deserved?"

"They first gave the dogs an ill name, and then hanged them," replied Ravenswood. "I hope to see the day when justice shall be open to Whig and Tory, and when these nicknames shall only be used among coffee-house politicians, as 'slut' and 'jade' are among apple-women, as cant terms of idle spite and rancor."

"That will not be in our days, Master: the iron has entered too deeply into our sides and our souls."

"It will be, however, one day," replied the Master; "men will not always start at these nicknames as at a trumpet-sound. As social life is better protected, its comforts will become too dear to be hazarded without some better reason than speculative politics."

"It is fine talking," answered Bucklaw; "but my heart is with the old song—

> "'To see good corn upon the rigs,
> And a gallows built to hang the Whigs,
> And the right restored where the right should be,
> O, that is the thing that would wanton me.'"

"You may sing as loudly as you will, *cantabit vacuus*——," answered the Master; "but I believe the Marquis is too wise, at least too wary, to join you in such a burden. I suspect he alludes to a revolution in the Scottish privy council, rather than in the British kingdoms."

"O, confusion to your state tricks!" exclaimed Bucklaw—"your cold calculating manœuvres, which old gentlemen in wrought nightcaps and furred gowns execute like so many games at chess, and displace a treasurer or lord commissioner as they would take a rook or a pawn. Tennis for my sport, and battle for my earnest! My racket and my sword for my plaything and bread-winner! And you, Master, so deep and considerate as you would seem, you have that within you makes the blood boil faster than suits your present humor of moralizing on political truths. You are one of those wise men who see everything with great composure till their blood is up, and then—woe to any one who should put them in mind of their own prudential maxims!"

"Perhaps," said Ravenswood, "you read me more rightly than I can myself. But to think justly will certainly go some

length in helping me to act so. But hark! I hear Caleb tolling the dinner-bell."

"Which he always does with the more sonorous grace in proportion to the meagreness of the cheer which he has provided," said Bucklaw; "as if that infernal clang and jangle, which will one day bring the belfry down the cliff, could convert a starved hen into a fat capon, and a blade-bone of mutton into a haunch of venison."

"I wish we may be so well off as your worst conjectures surmise, Bucklaw, from the extreme solemnity and ceremony with which Caleb seems to place on the table that solitary covered dish."

"Uncover, Caleb! uncover, for Heaven's sake!" said Bucklaw; "let us have what you can give us without preface. Why, it stands well enough, man," he continued, addressing impatiently the ancient butler, who, without reply, kept shifting the dish, until he had at length placed it with mathematical precision in the very midst of the table.

"What have we got here, Caleb?" inquired the Master in his turn.

"Ahem! sir, ye suld have known before; but his honor the Laird of Bucklaw is so impatient," answered Caleb, still holding the dish with one hand and the cover with the other, with evident reluctance to disclose the contents.

"But what is it, a God's name—not a pair of clean spurs, I hope, in the Border fashion of old times?"

"Ahem! ahem!" reiterated Caleb, "your honor is pleased to be facetious; natheless, I might presume to say it was a convenient fashion, and used, as I have heard, in an honorable and thriving family. But touching your present dinner, I judged that this being St. Magdalen's [Margaret's] Eve, who was a worthy queen of Scotland in her day, your honors might judge it decorous, if not altogether to fast, yet only to sustain nature with some slight refection, as ane saulted herring or the like." And, uncovering the dish, he displayed four of the savory fishes which he mentioned, adding, in a subdued tone, "that they were no just common herring neither, being every ane melters, and sauted with uncommon care by the housekeeper [poor Mysie] for his honor's especial use."

"Out upon all apologies!" said the Master, "let us eat the herrings, since there is nothing better to be had; but I begin to think with you, Bucklaw, that we are consuming the last green leaf, and that, in spite of the Marquis's political machinations, we must positively shift camp for want of forage, without waiting the issue of them."

CHAPTER IX

Ay, and when huntsmen wind the merry horn,
And from its covert starts the fearful prey,
Who, warm'd with youth's blood in his swelling veins,
Would, like a lifeless clod, outstretched lie,
Shut out from all the fair creation offers?

Ethwald, Act I., Scene 1.

LIGHT meals procure light slumbers; and therefore it is not surprising that, considering the fare which Caleb's conscience, or his necessity, assuming, as will sometimes happen, that disguise, had assigned to the guests of Wolf's Crag, their slumbers should have been short.

In the morning Bucklaw rushed into his host's apartment with a loud halloo, which might have awaked the dead.

"Up! up! in the name of Heaven! The hunters are out, the only piece of sport I have seen this month; and you lie here, Master, on a bed that has little to recommend it, except that it may be something softer than the stone floor of your ancestor's vault."

"I wish," said Ravenswood, raising his head peevishly, "you had forborne so early a jest, Mr. Hayston; it is really no pleasure to lose the very short repose which I had just begun to enjoy, after a night spent in thoughts upon fortune far harder than my couch, Bucklaw."

"Pshaw, pshaw!" replied his guest; "get up—get up; the hounds are abroad. I have saddled the horses myself, for old Caleb was calling for grooms and lackeys, and would never have proceeded without two hours' apology for the absence of men that were a hundred miles off. Get up, Master; I say the hounds are out—get up, I say; the hunt is up." And off ran Bucklaw.

"And I say," said the Master, rising slowly, "that nothing can concern me less. Whose hounds come so near to us?"

"The Honorable Lord Bittlebrains's," answered Caleb, who had followed the impatient Laird of Bucklaw into his master's bedroom, "and truly I ken nae title they have to be

yowling and howling within the freedoms and immunities of your lordship's right of free forestry."

"Nor I, Caleb," replied Ravenswood, "excepting that they have bought both the lands and the right of forestry, and may think themselves entitled to exercise the rights they have paid their money for."

"It may be sae, my lord," replied Caleb; "but it's no gentleman's deed of them to come here and exercise such-like right, and your lordship living at your ain castle of Wolf's Crag. Lord Bittlebrains would do weel to remember what his folk have been."

"And we what we now are," said the Master, with suppressed bitterness of feeling. "But reach me my cloak, Caleb, and I will indulge Bucklaw with a sight of this chase. It is selfish to sacrifice my guest's pleasure to my own."

"Sacrifice!" echoed Caleb, in a tone which seemed to imply the total absurdity of his master making the least concession in deference to any one—"sacrifice, indeed!—but I crave your honor's pardon, and whilk doublet is it your pleasure to wear?"

"Any one you will, Caleb; my wardrobe, I suppose, is not very extensive."

"Not extensive!" echoed his assistant; "when there is the gray and silver that your lordship bestowed on Hew Hildebrand, your outrider; and the French velvet that went with my lord your father—be gracious to him!—my lord your father's auld wardrobe to the puir friends of the family; and the *drap-de-Berry*——"

"Which I gave to you, Caleb, and which, I suppose, is the only dress we have any chance to come at, except that I wore yesterday; pray, hand me that, and say no more about it."

"If your honor has a fancy," replied Caleb, "and doubtless it's a sad-colored suit, and you are in mourning; nevertheless, I have never tried on the *drap-de-Berry*—ill wad it become me—and your honor having no change of claiths at this present—and it's weel brushed, and as there are leddies down yonder——"

"Ladies!" said Ravenswood; "and what ladies, pray?"

"What do I ken, your lordship? Looking down at them from the Warden's Tower, I could but see them glent by wi' their bridles ringing and their feathers fluttering, like the court of Elfland."

"Well, well, Caleb," replied the Master, "help me on with my cloak, and hand me my sword-belt. What clatter is that in the courtyard?"

"Just Bucklaw bringing out the horses," said Caleb, after a glance through the window, "as if there werena men eneugh in the castle, or as if I couldna serve the turn of ony o' them that are out o' the gate."

"Alas! Caleb, we should want little if your ability were equal to your will," replied his master.

"And I hope your lordship disna want that muckle," said Caleb; "for, considering a' things, I trust we support the credit of the family as weel as things will permit of,—only Bucklaw is aye sae frank and sae forward. And there he has brought out your lordship's palfrey, without the saddle being decored wi' the broidered sumpter-cloth! and I could have brushed it in a minute."

"It is all very well," said his master, escaping from him and descending the narrow and steep winding staircase which led to the courtyard.

"It *may* be a' very weel," said Caleb, somewhat peevishly; "but if your lordship wad tarry a bit, I will tell you what will *not* be very weel."

"And what is that?" said Ravenswood, impatiently, but stopping at the same time.

"Why, just that ye suld speer ony gentleman hame to dinner; for I canna mak anither fast on a feast day, as when I cam ower Bucklaw wi' Queen Margaret; and, to speak truth, if your lordship wad but please to cast yoursell in the way of dining wi' Lord Bittlebrains, I'se warrand I wad cast about brawly for the morn; or if, stead o' that, ye wad but dine wi' them at the change-house, ye might mak your shift for the lawing: ye might say ye had forgot your purse, or that the carline awed ye rent, and that ye wad allow it in the settlement."

"Or any other lie that came uppermost, I suppose?" said his master. "Good-by, Caleb; I commend your care for the honor of the family." And, throwing himself on his horse, he followed Bucklaw, who, at the manifest risk of his neck, had begun to gallop down the steep path which led from the Tower as soon as he saw Ravenswood have his foot in the stirrup.

Caleb Balderstone looked anxiously after them, and shook his thin gray locks—"And I trust they will come to no evil; but they have reached the plain, and folk cannot say but that the horse are hearty and in spirits."

Animated by the natural impetuosity and fire of his temper, young Bucklaw rushed on with the careless speed of a whirlwind. Ravenswood was scarce more moderate in his

pace, for his was a mind unwillingly roused from contemplative inactivity, but which, when once put into motion, acquired a spirit of forcible and violent progression. Neither was his eagerness proportioned in all cases to the motive of impulse, but might be compared to the speed of a stone, which rushes with like fury down the hill whether it was first put in motion by the arm of a giant or the hand of a boy. He felt, therefore, in no ordinary degree, the headlong impulse of the chase, a pastime so natural to youth of all ranks, that it seems rather to be an inherent passion in our animal nature, which levels all differences of rank and education, than an acquired habit of rapid exercise.

The repeated bursts of the French horn, which was then always used for the encouragement and direction of the hounds; the deep, though distant baying of the pack; the half-heard cries of the huntsmen; the half-seen forms which were discovered, now emerging from glens which crossed the moor, now sweeping over its surface, now picking their way where it was impeded by morasses; and, above all, the feeling of his own rapid motion, animated the Master of Ravenswood, at least for the moment, above the recollections of a more painful nature by which he was surrounded. The first thing which recalled him to those unpleasing circumstances was feeling that his horse, notwithstanding all the advantages which he received from his rider's knowledge of the country, was unable to keep up with the chase. As he drew his bridle up with the bitter feeling that his poverty excluded him from the favorite recreation of his forefathers, and indeed their sole employment when not engaged in military pursuits, he was accosted by a well-mounted stranger, who, unobserved, had kept near him during the earlier part of his career.

"Your horse is blown," said the man, with a complaisance seldom used in a hunting-field. "Might I crave your honor to make use of mine?"

"Sir," said Ravenswood, more surprised than pleased at such a proposal, "I really do not know how I have merited such a favor at a stranger's hands."

"Never ask a question about it, Master," said Bucklaw, who, with great unwillingness, had hitherto reined in his own gallant steed, not to outride his host and entertainer. "Take the goods the gods provide you, as the great John Dryden says; or stay—here, my friend, lend me that horse; I see you have been puzzled to rein him up this half-hour. I'll take the devil out of him for you. Now, Master, do you ride mine, which will carry you like an eagle."

And throwing the rein of his own horse to the Master of Ravenswood, he sprang upon that which the stranger resigned to him, and continued his career at full speed.

"Was ever so thoughtless a being!" said the Master; "and you, my friend, how could you trust him with your horse?"

"The horse," said the man, "belongs to a person who will make your honor, or any of your honorable friends, most welcome to him, flesh and fell."

"And the owner's name is——?" asked Ravenswood.

"Your honor must excuse me, you will learn that from himself. If you please to take your friend's horse, and leave me your galloway, I will meet you after the fall of the stag, for I hear they are blowing him at bay."

"I believe, my friend, it will be the best way to recover your good horse for you," answered Ravenswood; and mounting the nag of his friend Bucklaw, he made all the haste in his power to the spot where the blast of the horn announced that the stag's career was nearly terminated.

These jovial sounds were intermixed with the huntsmen's shouts of "Hyke a Talbot! Hyke a Teviot! now, boys, now!" and similar cheering halloos of the olden hunting-field, to which the impatient yelling of the hounds, now close on the object of their pursuit, gave a lively and unremitting chorus. The straggling riders began now to rally towards the scene of action, collecting from different points as to a common centre.

Bucklaw kept the start which he had gotten, and arrived first at the spot, where the stag, incapable of sustaining a more prolonged flight, had turned upon the hounds, and, in the hunter's phrase, was at bay. With his stately head bent down, his sides white with foam, his eyes strained betwixt rage and terror, the hunted animal had now in his turn become an object of intimidation to his pursuers. The hunters came up one by one, and watched an opportunity to assail him with some advantage, which, in such circumstances, can only be done with caution. The dogs stood aloof and bayed loudly, intimating at once eagerness and fear, and each of the sportsmen seemed to expect that his comrade would take upon him the perilous task of assaulting and disabling the animal. The ground, which was a hollow in the common or moor, afforded little advantage for approaching the stag unobserved; and general was the shout of triumph when Bucklaw, with the dexterity proper to an accomplished cavalier of the day, sprang from his horse, and dashing suddenly and

swiftly at the stag, brought him to the ground by a cut on the hind leg with his short hunting-sword. The pack, rushing in upon their disabled enemy, soon ended his painful struggles, and solemnized his fall with their clamor; the hunters, with their horns and voices, whooping and blowing a *mort*, or death-note, which resounded far over the billows of the adjacent ocean.

The huntsman then withdrew the hounds from the throttled stag, and on his knee presented his knife to a fair female form, on a white palfrey, whose terror, or perhaps her compassion, had till then kept her at some distance. She wore a black silk riding-mask, which was then a common fashion, as well for preserving the complexion from sun and rain, as from an idea of decorum, which did not permit a lady to appear barefaced while engaged in a boisterous sport, and attended by a promiscuous company. The richness of her dress, however, as well as the mettle and form of her palfrey, together with the sylvan compliment paid to her by the huntsman, pointed her out to Bucklaw as the principal person in the field. It was not without a feeling of pity, approaching even to contempt, that this enthusiastic hunter observed her refuse the huntsman's knife, presented to her for the purpose of making the first incision in the stag's breast, and thereby discovering the quality of the venison. He felt more than half inclined to pay his compliments to her; but it had been Bucklaw's misfortune, that his habits of life had not rendered him familiarly acquainted with the higher and better classes of female society, so that, with all his natural audacity, he felt sheepish and bashful when it became necessary to address a lady of distinction.

Taking unto himself heart of grace (to use his own phrase), he did at length summon up resolution enough to give the fair huntress good time of the day, and trust that her sport had answered her expectation. Her answer was very courteously and modestly expressed, and testified some gratitude to the gallant cavalier, whose exploit had terminated the chase so adroitly, when the hounds and huntsmen seemed somewhat at a stand.

"Uds daggers and scabbard, madam," said Bucklaw, whom this observation brought at once upon his own ground, "there is no difficulty or merit in that matter at all, so that a fellow is not too much afraid of having a pair of antlers in his guts. I have hunted at force five hundred times, madam; and I never yet saw the stag at bay, by land or water, but I durst have gone roundly in on him. It is all use and wont,

madam; and I'll tell you, madam, for all that, it must be done with good heed and caution; and you will do well, madam, to have your hunting-sword both right sharp and double-edged, that you may strike either fore-handed or back-handed, as you see reason, for a hurt with a buck's horn is a perilous and somewhat venomous matter."

"I am afraid, sir," said the young lady, and her smile was scarce concealed by her vizard, "I shall have little use for such careful preparation."

"But the gentleman says very right for all that, my lady," said an old huntsman, who had listened to Bucklaw's harangue with no small edification; "and I have heard my father say, who was a forester at the Cabrach, that a wild boar's gaunch is more easily healed than a hurt from the deer's horn, for so says the old woodman's rhyme—

"'If thou be hurt with horn of hart, it brings thee to thy bier;
But tusk of boar shall leeches heal, thereof have lesser fear.'"

"An I might advise," continued Bucklaw, who was now in his element, and desirous of assuming the whole management, "as the hounds are surbated and weary, the head of the stag should be cabaged in order to reward them; and if I may presume to speak, the huntsman, who is to break up the stag, ought to drink to your good ladyship's health a good lusty bicker of ale, or a tass of brandy; for if he breaks him up without drinking, the venison will not keep well."

This very agreeable prescription received, as will be readily believed, all acceptation from the huntsman, who, in requital, offered to Bucklaw the compliment of his knife, which the young lady had declined.

This polite proffer was seconded by his mistress. "I believe, sir," she said, withdrawing herself from the circle, "that my father, for whose amusement Lord Bittlebrains's hounds have been out to-day, will readily surrender all care of these matters to a gentleman of your experience."

Then, bending gracefully from her horse, she wished him good-morning, and, attended by one or two domestics, who seemed immediately attached to her service, retired from the scene of action, to which Bucklaw, too much delighted with an opportunity of displaying his woodcraft to care about man or woman either, paid little attention; but was soon stripped to his doublet, with tucked-up sleeves, and naked arms up to the elbows in blood and grease, slashing, cutting, hacking, and hewing, with the precision of Sir Tristrem himself, and wrangling and disputing with all around him concerning

nombles, briskets, flankards, and raven-bones, then usual terms of the art of hunting, or of butchery, whichever the reader chooses to call it, which are now probably antiquated.

When Ravenswood, who followed a short space behind his friend, saw that the stag had fallen, his temporary ardor for the chase gave way to that feeling of reluctance which he endured at encountering in his fallen fortunes the gaze whether of equals or inferiors. He reined up his horse on the top of a gentle eminence, from which he observed the busy and gay scene beneath him, and heard the whoops of the huntsmen, gayly mingled with the cry of the dogs, and the neighing and trampling of the horses. But these jovial sounds fell sadly on the ear of the ruined nobleman. The chase, with all its train of excitations, has ever since feudal times been accounted the almost exclusive privilege of the aristocracy, and was anciently their chief employment in times of peace. The sense that he was excluded by his situation from enjoying the sylvan sport, which his rank assigned to him as a special prerogative, and the feeling that new men were now exercising it over the downs which had been jealously reserved by his ancestors for their own amusement, while he, the heir of the domain, was fain to hold himself at a distance from their party, awakened reflections calculated to depress deeply a mind like Ravenswood's, which was naturally contemplative and melancholy. His pride, however, soon shook off this feeling of dejection, and it gave way to impatience upon finding that his volatile friend Bucklaw seemed in no hurry to return with his borrowed steed, which Ravenswood, before leaving the field, wished to see restored to the obliging owner. As he was about to move towards the group of assembled huntsmen, he was joined by a horseman, who, like himself, had kept aloof during the fall of the deer.

This personage seemed stricken in years. He wore a scarlet cloak, buttoning high upon his face, and his hat was unlooped and slouched, probably by way of defence against the weather. His horse, a strong and steady palfrey, was calculated for a rider who proposed to witness the sport of the day rather than to share it. An attendant waited at some distance, and the whole equipment was that of an elderly gentleman of rank and fashion. He accosted Ravenswood very politely, but not without some embarrassment.

"You seem a gallant young gentleman, sir," he said, "and yet appear as indifferent to this brave sport as if you had my load of years on your shoulders."

"I have followed the sport with more spirit on other occa-

sions," replied the Master; "at present, late events in my family must be my apology; and besides," he added, "I was but indifferently mounted at the beginning of the sport."

"I think," said the stranger, "one of my attendants had the sense to accommodate your friend with a horse."

"I was much indebted to his politeness and yours," replied Ravenswood. "My friend is Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw, whom I dare say you will be sure to find in the thick of the keenest sportsmen. He will return your servant's horse, and take my pony in exchange; and will add," he concluded, turning his horse's head from the stranger, "his best acknowledgments to mine for the accommodation."

The Master of Ravenswood, having thus expressed himself, began to move homeward, with the manner of one who has taken leave of his company. But the stranger was not so to be shaken off. He turned his horse at the same time, and rode in the same direction, so near to the Master that, without outriding him, which the formal civility of the time, and the respect due to the stranger's age and recent civility, would have rendered improper, he could not easily escape from his company.

The stranger did not long remain silent. "This, then," he said, "is the ancient Castle of Wolf's Crag, often mentioned in the Scottish records," looking to the old tower, then darkening under the influence of a stormy cloud, that formed its background; for at the distance of a short mile, the chase, having been circuitous, had brought the hunters nearly back to the point which they had attained when Ravenswood and Bucklaw had set forward to join them.

Ravenswood answered this observation with a cold and distant assent.

"It was, as I have heard," continued the stranger, unabashed by his coldness, "one of the most early possessions of the honorable family of Ravenswood."

"Their earliest possession," answered the Master, "and probably their latest."

"I—I—I should hope not, sir," answered the stranger, clearing his voice with more than one cough, and making an effort to overcome a certain degree of hesitation; "Scotland knows what she owes to this ancient family, and remembers their frequent and honorable achievements. I have little doubt that, were it properly represented to her Majesty that so ancient and noble a family were subjected to dilapidation —I mean to decay—means might be found, *ad re-ædificandum antiquam domum*——"

"I will save you the trouble, sir, of discussing this point farther," interrupted the Master, haughtily. "I am the heir of that unfortunate house—I am the Master of Ravenswood. And you, sir, who seem to be a gentleman of fashion and education, must be sensible that the next mortification after being unhappy is the being loaded with undesired commiseration."

"I beg your pardon, sir," said the elder horseman; "I did not know—I am sensible I ought not to have mentioned—nothing could be farther from my thoughts than to suppose——"

"There are no apologies necessary, sir," answered Ravenswood, "for here, I suppose, our roads separate, and I assure you that we part in perfect equanimity on my side."

As speaking these words, he directed his horse's head towards a narrow causeway, the ancient approach to Wolf's Crag, of which it might be truly said, in the words of the Bard of Hope, that

> Frequented by few was the grass-cover'd road,
> Where the hunter of deer and the warrior trode,
> To his hills that encircle the sea.

But, ere he could disengage himself from his companion, the young lady we have already mentioned came up to join the stranger, followed by her servants.

"Daughter," said the stranger to the masked damsel, "this is the Master of Ravenswood."

It would have been natural that the gentleman should have replied to this introduction; but there was something in the graceful form and retiring modesty of the female to whom he was thus presented, which not only prevented him from inquiring to whom, and by whom, the annunciation had been made, but which even for the time struck him absolutely mute. At this moment the cloud which had long lowered above the height on which Wolf's Craig is situated, and which now, as it advanced, spread itself in darker and denser folds both over land and sea, hiding the distant objects and obscuring those which were nearer, turning the sea to a leaden complexion and the heath to a darker brown, began now, by one or two distant peals, to announce the thunders with which it was fraught; while two flashes of lightning, following each other very closely, showed in the distance the gray turrets of Wolf's Crag, and, more nearly, the rolling billows of the ocean, crested suddenly with red and dazzling light.

The horse of the fair huntress showed symptoms of impatience and restiveness, and it became impossible for Ravenswood, as a man or a gentleman, to leave her abruptly to the care of an aged father or her menial attendants. He was, or believed himself, obliged in courtesy to take hold of her bridle, and assist her in managing the unruly animal. While he was thus engaged, the old gentleman observed that the storm seemed to increase; that they were far from Lord Bittlebrains's, whose guests they were for the present; and that he would be obliged to the Master of Ravenswood to point him the way to the nearest place of refuge from the storm. At the same time he cast a wistful and embarrassed look towards the Tower of Wolf's Crag, which seemed to render it almost impossible for the owner to avoid offering an old man and a lady, in such an emergency, the temporary use of his house. Indeed, the condition of the young huntress made this courtesy indispensable; for, in the course of the services which he rendered, he could not but perceive that she trembled much, and was extremely agitated, from her apprehensions, doubtless, of the coming storm.

I know not if the Master of Ravenswood shared her terrors, but he was not entirely free from something like a similar disorder of nerves, as he observed, "The Tower of Wolf's Crag has nothing to offer beyond the shelter of its roof, but if that can be acceptable at such a moment——" he paused, as if the rest of the invitation stuck in his throat. But the old gentleman, his self-constituted companion, did not allow him to recede from the invitation which he had rather suffered to be implied than directly expressed.

"The storm," said the stranger, "must be an apology for waiving ceremony; his daughter's health was weak, she had suffered much from a recent alarm; he trusted their intrusion on the Master of Ravenswood's hospitality would not be altogether unpardonable in the circumstances of the case: his child's safety must be dearer to him than ceremony."

There was no room to retreat. The Master of Ravenswood led the way, continuing to keep hold of the lady's bridle to prevent her horse from starting at some unexpected explosion of thunder. He was not so bewildered in his own hurried reflections but that he remarked, that the deadly paleness which had occupied her neck and temples, and such of her features as the riding-mask left exposed, gave place to a deep and rosy suffusion; and he felt with embarrassment that a flush was by tacit sympathy excited in his own cheeks. The stranger, with watchfulness which he disguised under

apprehensions for the safety of his daughter, continued to observe the expression of the Master's countenance as they ascended the hill to Wolf's Crag. When they stood in front of that ancient fortress, Ravenswood's emotions were of a very complicated description; and as he led the way into the rude courtyard, and hallooed to Caleb to give attendance, there was a tone of sternness, almost of fierceness, which seemed somewhat alien from the courtesies of one who is receiving honored guests.

Caleb came; and not the paleness of the fair stranger at the first approach of the thunder, nor the paleness of any other person, in any other circumstances whatever, equalled that which overcame the thin cheeks of the disconsolate seneschal when he beheld this accession of guests to the castle, and reflected that the dinner hour was fast approaching. "Is he daft?" he muttered to himself—"is he clean daft a'thegither, to bring lords and leddies, and a host of folk behint them, and twal o'clock chappit?" Then approaching the Master, he craved pardon for having permitted the rest of his people to go out to see the hunt, observing, that "They wad never think of his lordship coming back till mirk night, and that he dreaded they might play the truant."

"Silence, Balderstone!" said Ravenswood, sternly; "your folly is unseasonable. Sir and madam," he said, turning to his guests, "this old man, and a yet older and more imbecile female domestic, form my whole retinue. Our means of refreshing you are more scanty than even so miserable a retinue, and a dwelling so dilapidated, might seem to promise you; but, such as they may chance to be, you may command them."

The elder stranger, struck with the ruined and even savage appearance of the Tower, rendered still more disconsolate by the lowering and gloomy sky, and perhaps not altogether unmoved by the grave and determined voice in which their host addressed them, looked round him anxiously, as if he half repented the readiness with which he had accepted the offered hospitality. But there was now no opportunity of receding from the situation in which he had placed himself.

As for Caleb, he was so utterly stunned by his master's public and unqualified acknowledgment of the nakedness of the land, that for two minutes he could only mutter within his hebdomadal beard, which had not felt the razor for six days, "He's daft—clean daft—red wud, and awa' wi't! But deil hae Caleb Balderstone," said he, collecting his powers of invention and resource, "if the family shall lose credit, if he

were as mad as the seven wise masters!" He then boldly advanced, and in spite of his master's frowns and impatience, gravely asked, "If he should not serve up some slight refection for the young leddy, and a glass of tokay, or old sack—or——"

"Truce to this ill-timed foolery," said the Master, sternly; "put the horses into the stable, and interrupt us no more with your absurdities."

"Your honor's pleasure is to be obeyed aboon a' things," said Caleb; "nevertheless, as for the sack and tokay which it is not your noble guests' pleasure to accept——"

But here the voice of Bucklaw, heard even above the clattering of hoofs and braying of horns with which it mingled, announced that he was scaling the pathway to the Tower at the head of the greater part of the gallant hunting train.

"The deil be in me," said Caleb, taking heart in spite of this new invasion of Philistines, "if they shall beat me yet! The hellicat ne'er-do-weel! to bring such a crew here, that will expect to find brandy as plenty as ditch-water, and he kenning sae absolutely the case in whilk we stand for the present! But I trow, could I get rid of thae gaping gowks of flunkies that hae won into the courtyard at the back of their betters, as mony a man gets preferment, I could make a' right yet."

The measures which he took to execute this dauntless resolution, the reader shall learn in the next chapter.

CHAPTER X

With throat unslaked, with black lips baked,
Agape they heard him call;
Gramercy they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath drew in,
As they had been drinking all!
COLERIDGE'S *Rime of the Ancient Mariner.*

HAYSTON of Bucklaw was one of the thoughtless class who never hesitate between their friend and their jest. When it was announced that the principal persons of the chase had taken their route towards Wolf's Crag, the huntsmen, as a point of civility, offered to transfer the venison to that mansion; a proffer which was readily accepted by Bucklaw, who thought much of the astonishment which their arrival in full body would occasion poor old Caleb Balderstone, and very little of the dilemma to which he was about to expose his friend the Master, so ill circumstanced to receive such a party. But in old Caleb he had to do with a crafty and alert antagonist, prompt at supplying, upon all emergencies, evasions and excuses suitable, as he thought, to the dignity of the family.

"Praise be blest!" said Caleb to himself, "ae leaf of the muckle gate has been swung to wi' yestreen's wind, and I think I can manage to shut the ither."

But he was desirous, like a prudent governor, at the same time to get rid, if possible, of the internal enemy, in which light he considered almost every one who eat and drank, ere he took measures to exclude those whom their jocund noise now pronounced to be near at hand. He waited, therefore, with impatience until his master had shown his two principal guests into the Tower, and then commenced his operations.

"I think," he said to the stranger menials, "that, as they are bringing the stag's head to the castle in all honor, we, who are indwellers, should receive them at the gate."

The unwary grooms had no sooner hurried out, in compliance with this insidious hint, than, one folding-door of the ancient gate being already closed by the wind, as has been already intimated, honest Caleb lost no time in shutting the

other with a clang, which resounded from donjon-vault to battlement. Having thus secured the pass, he forthwith indulged the excluded huntsmen in brief parley, from a small projecting window, or shot-hole, through which, in former days, the warders were wont to reconnoitre those who presented themselves before the gates. He gave them to understand, in a short and pithy speech, that the gate of the castle was never on any account opened during meal-times;* that his honor, the Master of Ravenswood, and some guests of quality, had just sat down to dinner; that there was excellent brandy at the hostler-wife's at Wolf's Hope down below; and he held out some obscure hint that the reckoning would be discharged by the Master; but this was uttered in a very dubious and oracular strain, for, like Louis XIV., Caleb Balderstone hesitated to carry *finesse* so far as direct falsehood, and was content to deceive, if possible, without directly lying.

This annunciation was received with surprise by some, with laughter by others, and with dismay by the expelled lackeys, who endeavored to demonstrate that their right of readmission, for the purpose of waiting upon their master and mistress, was at least indisputable. But Caleb was not in a humor to understand or admit any distinctions. He stuck to his original proposition with that dogged but convenient pertinacity which is armed against all conviction, and deaf to all reasoning. Bucklaw now came from the rear of the party, and demanded admittance in a very angry tone. But the resolution of Caleb was immovable.

"If the king on the throne were at the gate," he declared, "his ten fingers should never open it contrair to the established use and wont of the family of Ravenswood, and his duty as their head-servant."

Bucklaw was now extremely incensed, and with more oaths and curses than we care to repeat, declared himself most unworthily treated, and demanded peremptorily to speak with the Master of Ravenswood himself.

But to this also Caleb turned a deaf ear. "He's as soon a-bleeze as a tap of tow, the lad Bucklaw," he said; "but the deil of ony master's face he shall see till he has sleepit and wakened on't. He'll ken himsell better the morn's morning. It sets the like o' him, to be bringing a crew of drunken hunters here, when he kens there is but little preparation to sloken his ain drought." And he disappeared from the window, leaving them all to digest their exclusion as they best might.

* See *Old Mortality*, Note 12, p. 416.

But another person, of whose presence Caleb, in the animation of the debate, was not aware, had listened in silence to its progress. This was the principal domestic of the stranger—a man of trust and consequence—the same who, in the hunting-field, had accommodated Bucklaw with the use of his horse. He was in the stable when Caleb had contrived the expulsion of his fellow-servants, and thus avoided sharing the same fate, from which his personal importance would certainly not have otherwise saved him.

This personage perceived the manœuvre of Caleb, easily appreciated the motive of his conduct, and knowing his master's intentions towards the family of Ravenswood, had no difficulty as to the line of conduct he ought to adopt. He took the place of Caleb (unperceived by the latter) at the post of audience which he had just left, and announced to the assembled domestics, "That it was his master's pleasure that Lord Bittlebrains's retinue and his own should go down to the adjacent change-house and call for what refreshments they might have occasion for, and he should take care to discharge the lawing."

The jolly troop of huntsmen retired from the inhospitable gate of Wolf's Crag, execrating, as they descended the steep pathway, the niggard and unworthy disposition of the proprietor, and damning, with more than sylvan license, both the castle and its inhabitants. Bucklaw, with many qualities which would have made him a man of worth and judgment in more favorable circumstances, had been so utterly neglected in point of education, that he was apt to think and feel according to the ideas of the companions of his pleasures. The praises which had recently been heaped upon himself he contrasted with the general abuse now levelled against Ravenswood; he recalled to his mind the dull and monotonous days he had spent in the Tower of Wolf's Crag, compared with the joviality of his usual life; he felt with great indignation his exclusion from the castle, which he considered as a gross affront, and every mingled feeling led him to break off the union which he had formed with the Master of Ravenswood.

On arriving at the change-house of the village of Wolf's Hope, he unexpectedly met with an old acquaintance just alighting from his horse. This was no other than the very respectable Captain Craigengelt, who immediately came up to him, and, without appearing to retain any recollection of the indifferent terms on which they had parted, shook him by the hand in the warmest manner possible. A warm grasp of the hand was what Bucklaw could never help returning with

cordiality, and no sooner had Craigengelt felt the pressure of his fingers than he knew the terms on which he stood with him.

"Long life to you, Bucklaw!" he exclaimed; "there's life for honest folk in this bad world yet!"

The Jacobites at this period, with what propriety I know not, used, it must be noticed, the term of *honest men* as peculiarly descriptive of their own party.

"Ay, and for others besides, it seems," answered Bucklaw; "otherways, how came you to venture hither, noble Captain?"

"Who—I? I am as free as the wind at Martinmas, that pays neither land-rent nor annual; all is explained—all settled with the honest old drivellers yonder of Auld Reekie. Pooh! pooh! they dared not keep me a week of days in durance. A certain person has better friends among them than you wot of, and can serve a friend when it is least likely."

"Pshaw!" answered Hayston, who perfectly knew and thoroughly despised the character of this man, "none of your cogging gibberish; tell me truly, are you at liberty and in safety?"

"Free and safe as a Whig bailie on the causeway of his own borough, or a canting Presbyterian minister in his own pulpit; and I came to tell you that you need not remain in hiding any longer."

"Then I suppose you call yourself my friend, Captain Craigengelt?" said Bucklaw.

"Friend!" replied Craigengelt, "my cock of the pit! why, I am thy very Achates, man, as I have heard scholars say—hand and glove—bark and tree—thine to life and death!"

"I'll try that in a moment," answered Bucklaw. "Thou art never without money, however thou comest by it. Lend me two pieces to wash the dust out of these honest fellows' throats in the first place, and then——"

"Two pieces! Twenty are at thy service, my lad, and twenty to back them."

"Ay, say you so?" said Bucklaw, pausing, for his natural penetration led him to suspect some extraordinary motive lay couched under such an excess of generosity. "Craigengelt, you are either an honest fellow in right good earnest, and I scarce know how to believe that; or you are cleverer than I took you for, and I scarce know how to believe that either."

"*L'un n'empêche pas l'autre,*" said Craigengelt. "Touch and try; the gold is good as ever was weighed."

He put a quantity of gold pieces into Bucklaw's hand, which he thrust into his pocket without either counting or looking at them, only observing, "That he was so circumstanced that he must enlist, though the devil offered the press-money;" and then turning to the huntsmen, he called out, "Come along, my lads; all is at my cost."

"Long life to Bucklaw!" shouted the men of the chase.

"And confusion to him that takes his share of the sport, and leaves the hunters as dry as a drumhead," added another, by way of corollary.

"The house of Ravenswood was ance a gude and an honorable house in this land," said an old man; "but it's lost its credit this day, and the Master has shown himself no better than a greedy cullion."

And with this conclusion, which was unanimously agreed to by all who heard it, they rushed tumultuously into the house of entertainment, where they revelled till a late hour. The jovial temper of Bucklaw seldom permitted him to be nice in the choice of his associates; and on the present occasion, when his joyous debauch received additional zest from the intervention of an unusual space of sobriety, and almost abstinence, he was as happy in leading the revels as if his comrades had been sons of princes. Craigengelt had his own purposes in fooling him up to the top of his bent; and having some low humor, much impudence, and the power of singing a good song, understanding besides thoroughly the disposition of his regained associate, he readily succeeded in involving him bumper-deep in the festivity of the meeting.

A very different scene was in the mean time passing in the Tower of Wolf's Crag. When the Master of Ravenswood left the courtyard, too much busied with his own perplexed reflections to pay attention to the manœuvre of Caleb, he ushered his guests into the great hall of the castle.

The indefatigable Balderstone, who, from choice or habit, worked on from morning to night, had by degrees cleared this desolate apartment of the confused relics of the funeral banquet, and restored it to some order. But not all his skill and labor, in disposing to advantage the little furniture which remained, could remove the dark and disconsolate appearance of those ancient and disfurnished walls. The narrow windows, flanked by deep indentures into the wall, seemed formed rather to exclude than to admit the cheerful light; and the heavy and gloomy appearance of the thunder-sky added still farther to the obscurity.

As Ravenswood, with the grace of a gallant of that period, but not without a certain stiffness and embarrassment of manner, handed the young lady to the upper end of the apartment, her father remained standing more near to the door, as if about to disengage himself from his hat and cloak. At this moment the clang of the portal was heard, a sound at which the stranger started, stepped hastily to the window, and looked with an air of alarm at Ravenswood, when he saw that the gate of the court was shut, and his domestics excluded.

"You have nothing to fear, sir," said Ravenswood, gravely; "this roof retains the means of giving protection, though not welcome. Methinks," he added, "it is time that I should know who they are that have thus highly honored my ruined dwelling!"

The young lady remained silent and motionless, and the father, to whom the question was more directly addressed, seemed in the situation of a performer who has ventured to take upon himself a part which he finds himself unable to present, and who comes to a pause when it is most to be expected that he should speak. While he endeavored to cover his embarrassment with the exterior ceremonials of a well-bred demeanor, it was obvious that, in making his bow, one foot shuffled forward, as if to advance, the other backward, as if with the purpose of escape; and as he undid the cape of his coat, and raised his beaver from his face, his fingers fumbled as if the one had been linked with rusted iron or the other had weighed equal with a stone of lead. The darkness of the sky seemed to increase, as if to supply the want of those mufflings which he laid aside with such evident reluctance. The impatience of Ravenswood increased also in proportion to the delay of the stranger, and he appeared to struggle under agitation, though probably from a very different cause. He labored to restrain his desire to speak, while the stranger, to all appearance, was at a loss for words to express what he felt it necessary to say.

At length Ravenswood's impatience broke the bounds he had imposed upon it. "I perceive," he said, "that Sir William Ashton is unwilling to announce himself in the Castle of Wolf's Crag."

"I had hoped it was unnecessary," said the Lord Keeper, relieved from his silence, as a spectre by the voice of the exorcist; "and I am obliged to you, Master of Ravenswood, for breaking the ice at once, where circumstances—unhappy circumstances, let me call them—rendered self-introduction peculiarly awkward."

"And I am not then," said the Master of Ravenswood, gravely, "to consider the honor of this visit as purely accidental?"

"Let us distinguish a little," said the Keeper, assuming an appearance of ease which perhaps his heart was a stranger to; "this is an honor which I have eagerly desired for some time, but which I might never have obtained, save for the accident of the storm. My daughter and I are alike grateful for this opportunity of thanking the brave man to whom she owes her life and I mine."

The hatred which divided the great families in the feudal times had lost little of its bitterness, though it no longer expressed itself in deeds of open violence. Not the feelings which Ravenswood had begun to entertain towards Lucy Ashton, not the hospitality due to his guests, were able entirely to subdue, though they warmly combated, the deep passions which arose within him at beholding his father's foe standing in the hall of the family of which he had in a great measure accelerated the ruin. His looks glanced from the father to the daughter with an irresolution of which Sir William Ashton did not think it proper to await the conclusion. He had now disembarrassed himself of his riding-dress, and walking up to his daughter, he undid the fastening of her mask.

"Lucy, my love," he said, raising her and leading her towards Ravenswood, "lay aside your mask, and let us express our gratitude to the Master openly and barefaced."

"If he will condescend to accept it," was all that Lucy uttered; but in a tone so sweetly modulated, and which seemed to imply at once a feeling and a forgiving of the cold reception to which they were exposed, that, coming from a creature so innocent and so beautiful, her words cut Ravenswood to the very heart for his harshness. He muttered something of surprise, something of confusion, and, ending with a warm and eager expression of his happiness at being able to afford her shelter under his roof, he saluted her, as the ceremonial of the time enjoined upon such occasions. Their cheeks had touched and were withdrawn from each other; Ravenswood had not quitted the hand which he had taken in kindly courtesy; a blush, which attached more consequence by far than was usual to such ceremony, still mantled on Lucy Ashton's beautiful cheek, when the apartment was suddenly illuminated by a flash of lightning, which seemed absolutely to swallow the darkness of the hall. Every object might have been for an instant seen distinctly. The

slight and half-sinking form of Lucy Ashton; the well-proportioned and stately figure of Ravenswood, his dark features, and the fiery yet irresolute expression of his eyes; the old arms and scutcheons which hung on the walls of the apartment, were for an instant distinctly visible to the Keeper by a strong red brilliant glare of light. Its disappearance was almost instantly followed by a burst of thunder, for the storm-cloud was very near the castle; and the peal was so sudden and dreadful, that the old tower rocked to its foundation, and every inmate concluded it was falling upon them. The soot, which had not been disturbed for centuries, showered down the huge tunnelled chimneys; lime and dust flew in clouds from the wall; and, whether the lightning had actually struck the castle or whether through the violent concussion of the air, several heavy stones were hurled from the mouldering battlements into the roaring sea beneath. It might seem as if the ancient founder of the castle were bestriding the thunderstorm, and proclaiming his displeasure at the reconciliation of his descendant with the enemy of his house.

The consternation was general, and it required the efforts of both the Lord Keeper and Ravenswood to keep Lucy from fainting. Thus was the Master a second time engaged in the most delicate and dangerous of all tasks, that of affording support and assistance to a beautiful and helpless being, who, as seen before in a similar situation, had already become a favorite of his imagination, both when awake and when slumbering. If the genius of the house really condemned a union betwixt the Master and his fair guest, the means by which he expressed his sentiments were as unhappily chosen as if he had been a mere mortal. The train of little attentions, absolutely necessary to soothe the young lady's mind, and aid her in composing her spirits, necessarily threw the Master of Ravenswood into such an intercourse with her father as was calculated, for the moment at least, to break down the barrier of feudal enmity which divided them. To express himself churlishly, or even coldly, towards an old man whose daughter (and *such* a daughter) lay before them, overpowered with natural terror—and all this under his own roof—the thing was impossible; and by the time that Lucy, extending a hand to each, was able to thank them for their kindness, the Master felt that his sentiments of hostility towards the Lord Keeper were by no means those most predominant in his bosom.

The weather, her state of health, the absence of her at-

tendants, all prevented the possibility of Lucy Ashton renewing her journey to Bittlebrains House, which was full five miles distant; and the Master of Ravenswood could not but, in common courtesy, offer the shelter of his roof for the rest of the day and for the night. But a flush of less soft expression, a look much more habitual to his features, resumed predominance when he mentioned how meanly he was provided for the entertainment of his guests.

"Do not mention deficiencies," said the Lord Keeper, eager to interrupt him and prevent his resuming an alarming topic; "you are preparing to set out for the Continent, and your house is probably for the present unfurnished. All this we understand; but if you mention inconvenience, you will oblige us to seek accommodations in the hamlet."

As the Master of Ravenswood was about to reply, the door of the hall opened, and Caleb Balderstone rushed in.

CHAPTER XI

Let them have meat enough, woman—half a hen;
There be old rotten pilchards—put them off too;
'Tis but a little new anointing of them,
And a strong onion, that confounds the savor.

Love's Pilgrimage.

THE thunderbolt, which had stunned all who were within hearing of it, had only served to awaken the bold and inventive genius of the flower of majors-domo. Almost before the clatter had ceased, and while there was yet scarce an assurance whether the castle was standing or falling, Caleb exclaimed, "Heavens be praised! this comes to hand like the boul of a pint-stoup." He then barred the kitchen door in the face of the Lord Keeper's servant, whom he perceived returning from the party at the gate, and muttering, "How the deil cam he in?—but deil may care. Mysie, what are ye sitting shaking and greeting in the chimney-neuk for? Come here—or stay where ye are, and skirl as loud as ye can; it's a' ye're gude for. I say, ye auld deevil, skirl—skirl—louder—louder, woman; gar the gentles hear ye in the ha'. I have heard ye as far off as the Bass for a less matter. And stay—down wi' that crockery——"

And with a sweeping blow, he threw down from a shelf some articles of pewter and earthenware. He exalted his voice amid the clatter, shouting and roaring in a manner which changed Mysie's hysterical terrors of the thunder into fears that her old fellow-servant was gone distracted. "He has dung down a' the bits o' pigs, too—the only thing we had left to haud a soup milk—and he has spilled the hatted kit that was for the Master's dinner. Mercy save us, the auld man's gaen clean and clear wud wi' the thunner!"

"Haud your tongue, ye b——!" said Caleb, in the impetuous and overbearing triumph of successful invention, "a's provided now—dinner and a'thing; the thunner's done a' in a clap of a hand!"

"Puir man, he's muckle astray," said Mysie, looking at him with a mixture of pity and alarm; "I wish he may ever come hame to himsell again."

"Here, ye auld doited deevil," said Caleb, still exulting in his extrication from a dilemma which had seemed insurmountable; "keep the strange man out of the kitchen; swear the thunner came down the chimney and spoiled the best dinner ye ever dressed—beef—bacon—kid—lark—leveret—wild-fowl—venison, and what-not. Lay it on thick, and never mind expenses. I'll awa' up to the ha'. Make a' the confusion ye can; but be sure ye keep out the strange servant."

With these charges to his ally, Caleb posted up to the hall, but stopping to reconnoitre through an aperture, which time, for the convenience of many a domestic in succession, had made in the door, and perceiving the situation of Miss Ashton, he had prudence enough to make a pause, both to avoid adding to her alarm and in order to secure attention to his account of the disastrous effects of the thunder.

But when he perceived that the lady was recovered, and heard the conversation turn upon the accommodation and refreshment which the castle afforded, he thought it time to burst into the room in the manner announced in the last chapter.

"Willawins!—willawins! Such a misfortune to befa' the house of Ravenswood, and I to live to see it."

"What is the matter, Caleb?" said his master, somewhat alarmed in his turn; "has any part of the castle fallen?"

"Castle fa'an! na, but the sute's fa'an, and the thunner's come right down the kitchen-lum, and the things are a' lying here awa', there awa', like the Laird o' Hotchpotch's lands; and wi' brave guests of honor and quality to entertain [a low bow here to Sir William Ashton and his daughter], and naething left in the house fit to present for dinner, or for supper either, for aught that I can see!"

"I verily believe you, Caleb," said Ravenswood, dryly.

Balderstone here turned to his master a half-upbraiding, half-imploring countenance, and edged towards him as he repeated, "It was nae great matter of preparation; but just something added to your honor's ordinary course of fare—*petty cover*, as they say at the Louvre—three courses and the fruit."

"Keep your intolerable nonsense to yourself, you old fool!" said Ravenswood, mortified at his officiousness, yet not knowing how to contradict him, without the risk of giving rise to scenes yet more ridiculous.

Caleb saw his advantage, and resolved to improve it. But first, observing that the Lord Keeper's servant entered the apartment and spoke apart with his master, he took the same

opportunity to whisper a few words into Ravenswood's ear—"Haud your tongue, for heaven's sake, sir; if it's my pleasure to hazard my soul in telling lees for the honor of the family, it's nae business o' yours; and if ye let me gang on quietly, I'se be moderate in my banquet; but if ye contradict me, deil but I dress ye a dinner fit for a duke!"

Ravenswood, in fact, thought it would be best to let his officious butler run on, who proceeded to enumerate upon his fingers—"No muckle provision—might hae served four persons of honor,—first course, capons in white broth—roast kid—bacon with reverence; second course, roasted leveret—butter crabs—a veal florentine; third course, blackcock—it's black eneugh now wi' the sute—plumdamas—a tart—a flam—and some nonsense sweet things, and comfits—and that's a'," he said, seeing the impatience of his master—"that's just a' was o't—forbye the apples and pears."

Miss Ashton had by degrees gathered her spirits, so far as to pay some attention to what was going on; and observing the strained impatience of Ravenswood, contrasted with the peculiar determination of manner with which Caleb detailed his imaginary banquet, the whole struck her as so ridiculous that, despite every effort to the contrary, she burst into a fit of incontrollable langhter, in which she was joined by her father, though with more moderation, and finally by the Master of Ravenswood himself, though conscious that the jest was at his own expense. Their mirth—for a scene which we read with little emotion often appears extremely ludicrous to the spectators—made the old vault ring again. They ceased—they renewed—they ceased—they renewed again their shouts of laughter! Caleb, in the mean time, stood his ground with a grave, angry, and scornful dignity, which greatly enhanced the ridicule of the scene and the mirth of the spectators.

At length, when the voices, and nearly the strength, of the laughers were exhausted, he exclaimed, with very little ceremony, "The deil's in the gentles! they breakfast sae lordly, that the loss of the best dinner ever cook pat fingers to makes them as merry as if it were the best jeest in a' George Buchanan.* If there was as little in your honors' wames as there is in Caleb Balderstone's, less caickling wad serve ye on sic a gravaminous subject."

Caleb's blunt expression of resentment again awakened the mirth of the company, which, by the way, he regarded not only as an aggression upon the dignity of the family, but a

*See George Buchanan's Jests. Note 4.

special contempt of the eloquence with which he himself had summed up the extent of their supposed losses. "A description of a dinner," as he said afterwards to Mysie, "that wad hae made a fu' man hungry, and them to sit there laughing at it!"

"But," said Miss Ashton, composing her countenance as well as she could, "are all these delicacies so totally destroyed that no scrap can be collected?"

"Collected, my leddy! what wad ye collect out of the sute and the ass? Ye may gang down yoursell, and look into our kitchen—the cookmaid in the trembling exies—the gude vivers lying a' about—beef, capons, and white broth—florentine and flams—bacon wi' reverence—and a' the sweet confections and whim-whams—ye'll see them a', my leddy—that is," said he, correcting himself, "ye'll no see ony of them now, for the cook has soopit them up, as was weel her part; but ye'll see the white broth where it was spilt. I pat my fingers in it, and it tastes as like sour milk as onything else; if that isna the effect of thunner, I kenna what is. This gentleman here couldna but hear the clash of our haill dishes, china and silver thegither?"

The Lord Keeper's domestic, though a statesman's attendant, and of course trained to command his countenance upon all occasions, was somewhat discomposed by this appeal, to which he only answered by a bow.

"I think, Mr. Butler," said the Lord Keeper, who began to be afraid lest the prolongation of this scene should at length displease Ravenswood—"I think that, were you to retire with my servant Lockhard—he has travelled, and is quite accustomed to accidents and contingencies of every kind, and I hope betwixt you, you may find out some mode of supply at this emergency."

"His honor kens," said Caleb, who, however hopeless of himself of accomplishing what was desirable, would, like the high-spirited elephant, rather have died in the effort than brooked the aid of a brother in commission—"his honor kens weel I need nae counsellor, when the honor of the house is concerned."

"I should be unjust if I denied it, Caleb," said his master; "but your art lies chiefly in making apologies, upon which we can no more dine than upon the bill of fare of our thunder-blasted dinner. Now, possibly Mr. Lockhard's talent may consist in finding some substitute for that which certainly is not, and has in all probability never been."

"Your honor is pleased to be facetious," said Caleb, "but

I am sure that, for the warst, for a walk as far as Wolf's Hope, I could dine forty men—no that the folk there deserve your honor's custom. They hae been ill advised in the matter of the duty eggs and butter, I winna deny that."

"Do go consult together," said the Master; "go down to the village, and do the best you can. We must not let our guests remain without refreshment, to save the honor of a ruined family. And here, Caleb, take my purse; I believe that will prove your best ally."

"Purse! purse, indeed!" quoth Caleb, indignantly flinging out of the room; "what suld I do wi' your honor's purse, on your ain grund? I trust we are no to pay for our ain?"

The servants left the hall; and the door was no sooner shut than the Lord Keeper began to apologize for the rudeness of his mirth; and Lucy to hope she had given no pain or offence to the kind-hearted faithful old man.

"Caleb and I must both learn, madam, to undergo with good humor, or at least with patience, the ridicule which everywhere attaches itself to poverty."

"You do yourself injustice, Master of Ravenswood, on my word of honor," answered his elder guest. "I believe I know more of your affairs than you do yourself, and I hope to show you that I am interested in them; and that—in short, that your prospects are better than you apprehend. In the mean time, I can conceive nothing so respectable as the spirit which rises above misfortune, and prefers honorable privations to debt or dependence."

Whether from fear of offending the delicacy or awakening the pride of the Master, the Lord Keeper made these allusions with an appearance of fearful and hesitating reserve, and seemed to be afraid that he was intruding too far, in venturing to touch, however lightly, upon such a topic, even when the Master had led to it. In short, he appeared at once pushed on by his desire of appearing friendly, and held back by the fear of intrusion. It was no wonder that the Master of Ravenswood, little acquainted as he then was with life, should have given this consummate courtier credit for more sincerity than was probably to be found in a score of his cast. He answered, however, with reserve, that he was indebted to all who might think well of him; and, apologizing to his guests, he left the hall, in order to make such arrangements for their entertainment as circumstances admitted.

Upon consulting with old Mysie, the accommodations for the night were easily completed, as indeed they admitted of little choice. The Master surrendered his apartment for the

use of Miss Ashton, and Mysie, once a person of consequence, dressed in a black satin gown which had belonged of yore to the Master's grandmother, and had figured in the court-balls of Henrietta Maria, went to attend her as lady's-maid. He next inquired after Bucklaw, and understanding he was at the change-house with the huntsmen and some companions, he desired Caleb to call there, and acquaint him how he was circumstanced at Wolf's Crag; to intimate to him that it would be most convenient if he could find a bed in the hamlet, as the elder guest must necessarily be quartered in the secret chamber, the only spare bedroom which could be made fit to receive him. The Master saw no hardship in passing the night by the hall fire, wrapped in his campaign-cloak; and to Scottish domestics of the day, even of the highest rank, nay, to young men of family or fashion, on any pinch, clean straw, or a dry hay-loft, was always held good night-quarters.

For the rest, Lockhard had his master's orders to bring some venison from the inn, and Caleb was to trust to his wits for the honor of his family. The Master, indeed, a second time held out his purse; but, as it was in sight of the strange servant, the butler thought himself obliged to decline what his fingers itched to clutch. "Couldna he hae slippit it gently into my hand?" said Caleb; "but his honor will never learn how to bear himsell in siccan cases."

Mysie, in the mean time, according to a uniform custom in remote places in Scotland, offered the strangers the produce of her little dairy, "while better meat was getting ready." And according to another custom, not yet wholly in desuetude, as the storm was now drifting off to leeward, the Master carried the Keeper to the top of his highest tower to admire a wide and waste extent of view, and to "weary for his dinner."

CHAPTER XII

> Now dame," quoth he, "Je vous dis sans doute,
> Had I nought of a capon but the liver,
> And of your white bread nought but a shiver,
> And after that a roasted pigge's head
> (But I ne wold for me no beast were dead),
> Then had I with you homely sufferaunce."
>
> CHAUCER, *Sumner's Tale.*

It was not without some secret misgivings that Caleb set out upon his exploratory expedition. In fact, it was attended with a treble difficulty. He dared not tell his master the offence which he had that morning given to Bucklaw, just for the honor of the family; he dared not acknowledge he had been too hasty in refusing the purse; and, thirdly, he was somewhat apprehensive of unpleasant consequences upon his meeting Hayston under the impression of an affront, and probably by this time under the influence also of no small quantity of brandy.

Caleb, to do him justice, was as bold as any lion where the honor of the family of Ravenswood was concerned; but his was that considerate valor which does not delight in unnecessary risks. This, however, was a secondary consideration; the main point was to veil the indigence of the housekeeping at the castle, and to make good his vaunt of the cheer which his resources could procure, without Lockhard's assistance, and without supplies from his master. This was as prime a point of honor with him as with the generous elephant with whom we have already compared him, who, being overtasked, broke his skull through the desperate exertions which he made to discharge his duty, when he perceived they were bringing up another to his assistance.

The village which they now approached had frequently afforded the distressed butler resources upon similar emergencies; but his relations with it had been of late much altered.

It was a little hamlet which straggled along the side of a creek formed by the discharge of a small brook into the sea, and was hidden from the castle, to which it had been in former times an appendage, by the intervention of the shoulder of

a hill forming a projecting headland. It was called Wolf's Hope (*i.e.* Wolf's Haven), and the few inhabitants gained a precarious subsistence by manning two or three fishing-boats in the herring season, and smuggling gin and brandy during the winter months. They paid a kind of hereditary respect to the Lords of Ravenswood; but, in the difficulties of the family, most of the inhabitants of Wolf's Hope had contrived to get feu-rights to their little possessions, their huts, kail-yards, and rights of commonty, so that they were emancipated from the chains of feudal dependence, and free from the various exactions with which, under every possible pretext, or without any pretext at all, the Scottish landlords of the period, themselves in great poverty, were wont to harass their still poorer tenants at will. They might be, on the whole, termed independent, a circumstance peculiarly galling to Caleb, who had been wont to exercise over them the same sweeping authority in levying contributions which was exercised in former times in England, when "the royal purveyors, sallying forth from under the Gothic portcullis to purchase provisions with power and prerogative, instead of money, brought home the plunder of an hundred markets, and all that could be seized from a flying and hiding country, and deposited their spoil in an hundred caverns." *

Caleb loved the memory and resented the downfall of that authority, which mimicked, on a petty scale, the grand contributions exacted by the feudal sovereigns. And as he fondly flattered himself that the awful rule and right supremacy, which assigned to the Barons of Ravenswood the first and most effective interest in all productions of nature within five miles of their castle, only slumbered, and was not departed forever, he used every now and then to give the recollection of the inhabitants a little jog by some petty exaction. These were at first submitted to, with more or less readiness, by the inhabitants of the hamlet; for they had been so long used to consider the wants of the Baron and his family as having a title to be preferred to their own, that their actual independence did not convey to them an immediate sense of freedom. They resembled a man that has been long fettered, who, even at liberty, feels in imagination the grasp of the handcuffs still binding his wrists. But the exercise of freedom is quickly followed with the natural consciousness of its immunities, as the enlarged prisoner, by the free use of his limbs, soon dispels the cramped feeling they had acquired when bound.

* Burke's *Speech on Economical Reform*; *Works*, vol. iii., p. 250.

The inhabitants of Wolf's Hope began to grumble, to resist, and at length positively to refuse compliance with the exactions of Caleb Balderstone. It was in vain he reminded them, that when the eleventh Lord Ravenswood, called the Skipper, from his delight in naval matters, had encouraged the trade of their port by building the pier (a bulwark of stones rudely piled together), which protected the fishing-boats from the weather, it had been matter of understanding that he was to have the first stone of butter after the calving of every cow within the barony, and the first egg, thence called the Monday's egg, laid by every hen on every Monday in the year.

The feuars heard and scratched their heads, coughed, sneezed, and being pressed for answer, rejoined with one voice, "They could not say"—the universal refuge of a Scottish peasant when pressed to admit a claim which his conscience owns, or perhaps his feelings, and his interest inclines him to deny.

Caleb, however, furnished the notables of Wolf's Hope with a note of the requisition of butter and eggs, which he claimed as arrears of the aforesaid subsidy, or kindly aid, payable as above mentioned; and having intimated that he would not be averse to compound the same for goods or money, if it was inconvenient to them to pay in kind, left them, as he hoped, to debate the mode of assessing themselves for that purpose. On the contrary, they met with a determined purpose of resisting the exaction, and were only undecided as to the mode of grounding their opposition, when the cooper, a very important person on a fishing-station, and one of the conscript fathers of the village, observed, "That their hens had caickled mony a day for the Lords of Ravenswood, and it was time they suld caickle for those that gave them roosts and barley." A unanimous grin intimated the assent of the assembly. "And," continued the orator, "if it's your wull, I'll just tak a step as far as Dunse for Davie Dingwall, the writer, that's come frae the North to settle amang us, and he'll pit this job to rights, I'se warrant him."

A day was accordingly fixed for holding a grand palaver at Wolf's Hope on the subject of Caleb's requisitions, and he was invited to attend at the hamlet for that purpose.

He went with open hands and empty stomach, trusting to fill the one on his master's account and the other on his own score, at the expense of the feuars of Wolf's Hope. But, death to his hopes! as he entered the eastern end of the straggling village, the awful form of Davie Dingwall, a sly, dry, hard-

fisted, shrewd country attorney, who had already acted against the family of Ravenswood, and was a principal agent of Sir William Ashton, trotted in at the western extremity, bestriding a leathern portmanteau stuffed with the feu-charters of the hamlet, and hoping he had not kept Mr. Balderstone waiting, "as he was instructed and fully empowered to pay or receive, compound or compensate, and, in fine, to agé as accords, respecting all mutual and unsettled claims whatsoever, belonging or competent to the Honorable Edgar Ravenswood, commonly called the Master of Ravenswood——"

"The *Right* Honorable Edgar *Lord Ravenswood,*" said Caleb, with great emphasis; for, though conscious he had little chance of advantage in the conflict to ensue, he was resolved not to sacrifice one jot of honor.

"Lord Ravenswood, then," said the man of business—"we shall not quarrel with you about titles of courtesy—commonly called Lord Ravenswood, or Master of Ravenswood, heritable proprietor of the lands and barony of Wolf's Crag, on the one part, and to John Whitefish and others, feuars in the town of Wolf's Hope, within the barony aforesaid, on the other part."

Caleb was conscious, from sad experience, that he would wage a very different strife with this mercenary champion than with the individual feuars themselves, upon whose old recollections, predilections, and habits of thinking he might have wrought by a hundred indirect arguments, to which their deputy-representative was totally insensible. The issue of the debate proved the reality of his apprehensions. It was in vain he strained his eloquence and ingenuity, and collected into one mass all arguments arising from antique custom and hereditary respect, from the good deeds done by the Lords of Ravenswood to the community of Wolf's Hope in former days, and from what might be expected from them in future. The writer stuck to the contents of his feu-charters; he could not see it: 'twas not in the bond. And when Caleb, determined to try what a little spirit would do, deprecated the consequences of Lord Ravenswood's withdrawing his protection from the burgh, and even hinted at his using active measures of resentment, the man of law sneered in his face.

"His clients," he said, "had determined to do the best they could for their own town, and he thought Lord Ravenswood, since he was a lord, might have enough to do to look after his own castle. As to any threats of stouthrief oppression, by rule of thumb, or *via facti,* as the law termed it,

he would have Mr. Balderstone recollect, that new times were not as old times; that they lived on the south of the Forth, and far from the Highlands; that his clients thought they were able to protect themselves; but should they find themselves mistaken, they would apply to the government for the protection of a corporal and four red-coats, who," said Mr. Dingwall, with a grin, "would be perfectly able to secure them against Lord Ravenswood, and all that he or his followers could do by the strong hand."

If Caleb could have concentrated all the lightnings of aristocracy in his eye, to have struck dead this contemner of allegiance and privilege, he would have launched them at his head, without respect to the consequences. As it was, he was compelled to turn his course backward to the castle; and there he remained for full half a day invisible and inaccessible even to Mysie, sequestered in his own peculiar dungeon, where he sat burnishing a single pewter plate and whistling "Maggie Lauder" six hours without intermission.

The issue of this unfortunate requisition had shut against Caleb all resources which could be derived from Wolf's Hope and its purlieus, the El Dorado, or Peru, from which, in all former cases of exigence, he had been able to extract some assistance. He had, indeed, in a manner vowed that the deil should have him, if ever he put the print of his foot within its causeway again. He had hitherto kept his word; and, strange to tell, this secession had, as he intended, in some degree, the effect of a punishment upon the refractory feuars. Mr. Balderstone had been a person in their eyes connected with a superior order of things, whose presence used to grace their little festivities, whose advice they found useful on many occasions, and whose communications gave a sort of credit to their village. The place, they acknowledged, "didna look as it used to do, and should do, since Mr. Caleb keepit the castle sae closely; but doubtless, touching the eggs and butter, it was a most unreasonable demand, as Mr. Dingwall had justly made manifest."

Thus stood matters betwixt the parties, when the old butler, though it was gall and wormwood to him, found himself obliged either to acknowledge before a strange man of quality, and, what was much worse, before that stranger's servant, the total inability of Wolf's Crag to produce a dinner, or he must trust to the compassion of the feuars of Wolf's Hope. It was a dreadful degradation; but necessity was equally imperious and lawless. With these feelings he entered the street of the village.

Willing to shake himself from his companion as soon as

possible, he directed Mr. Lockhard to Luckie Sma'trash's change-house, where a din, proceeding from the revels of Bucklaw, Craigengelt, and their party, sounded half-way down the street, while the red glare from the window overpowered the gray twilight which was now settling down, and glimmered against a parcel of old tubs, kegs, and barrels, piled up in the cooper's yard, on the other side of the way.

"If you, Mr. Lockhard," said the old butler to his companion, "will be pleased to step to the change-house where that light comes from, and where, as I judge, they are now singing 'Cauld Kail in Aberdeen,' ye may do your master's errand about the venison, and I will do mine about Bucklaw's bed, as I return frae getting the rest of the vivers. It's no that the venison is actually needfu'," he added, detaining his colleague by the button, "to make up the dinner; but as a compliment to the hunters, ye ken; and, Mr. Lockhard, if they offer ye a drink o' yill, or a cup o' wine, or a glass o' brandy, ye'll be a wise man to take it, in case the thunner should hae soured ours at the castle, whilk is ower muckle to be dreaded."

He then permitted Lockhard to depart; and with foot heavy as lead, and yet far lighter than his heart, stepped on through the unequal street of the straggling village, meditating on whom he ought to make his first attack. It was necessary he should find some one with whom old acknowledged greatness should weigh more than recent independence, and to whom his application might appear an act of high dignity, relenting at once and soothing. But he could not recollect an inhabitant of a mind so constructed. "Our kail is like to be cauld eneugh too," he reflected, as the chorus of "Cauld Kail in Aberdeen" again reached his ears. The minister—he had got his presentation from the late lord, but they had quarrelled about teinds; the brewster's wife—she had trusted long, and the bill was aye scored up, and unless the dignity of the family should actually require it, it would be a sin to distress a widow woman. None was so able—but, on the other hand, none was likely to be less willing—to stand his friend upon the present occasion, than Gibbie Girder, the man of tubs and barrels already mentioned, who had headed the insurrection in the matter of the egg and butter subsidy. "But a' comes o' taking folk on the right side, I trow," quoth Caleb to himself; "and I had ance the ill hap to say he was but a Johny New-come in our town, and the carle bore the family an ill-will ever since. But he married a bonny young queen, Jean Lightbody, auld Lightbody's daughter, him that was in the

steading of Loup-the-Dyke; and auld Lightbody was married himsell to Marion, that was about my lady in the family forty years syne. I hae had mony a day's daffing wi' Jean's mither, and they say she bides on wi' them. The carle has Jacobuses and Georgiuses baith, an ane could get at them; and sure I am, it's doing him an honor him or his never deserved at our hand, the ungracious sumph; and if he loses by us a'the-gither, he is e'en cheap o't: he can spare it brawly."

Shaking off irresolution, therefore, and turning at once upon his heel, Caleb walked hastily back to the cooper's house, lifted the latch without ceremony, and, in a moment, found himself behind the "hallan," or partition, from which position he could, himself unseen, reconnoitre the interior of the "but," or kitchen apartment, of the mansion.

Reverse of the sad menage at the Castle of Wolf's Crag, a bickering fire roared up the cooper's chimney. His wife, on the one side, in her pearlings and pudding-sleeves, put the last finishing touch to her holiday's apparel, while she contemplated a very handsome and good-humored face in a broken mirror, raised upon the "bink" (the shelves on which the plates are disposed) for her special accommodation. Her mother, old Luckie Loup-the-Dyke, "a canty carline" as was within twenty miles of her, according to the unanimous report of the "cummers," or gossips, sat by the fire in the full glory of a grogram gown, lammer beads, and a clean cockernony, whiffing a snug pipe of tobacco, and superintending the affairs of the kitchen; for—sight more interesting to the anxious heart and craving entrails of the desponding seneschal than either buxom dame or canty cummer—there bubbled on the aforesaid bickering fire a huge pot, or rather caldron, steaming with beef and brewis; while before it revolved two spits, turned each by one of the cooper's apprentices, seated in the opposite corners of the chimney, the one loaded with a quarter of mutton, while the other was graced with a fat goose and a brace of wild ducks. The sight and scent of such a land of plenty almost wholly overcame the drooping spirits of Caleb. He turned, for a moment's space, to reconnoitre the "ben," or parlor end of the house, and there saw a sight scarce less affecting to his feelings—a large round table, covered for ten or twelve persons, decored (according to his own favorite term) with napery as white as snow, grand flagons of pewter, intermixed with one or two silver cups, containing, as was probable, something worthy the brilliancy of their outward appearance, clean trenchers, cutty spoons, knives and forks, sharp, burnished, and prompt for action, which lay all displayed as for an especial festival.

"The devil's in the peddling tub-coopering carle!" muttered Caleb, in all the envy of astonishment; "it's a shame to see the like o' them gusting their gabs at sic a rate. But if some o' that gude cheer does not find its way to Wolf's Crag this night, my name is not Caleb Balderstone."

So resolving, he entered the apartment, and, in all courteous greeting, saluted both the mother and the daughter. Wolf's Crag was the court of the barony, Caleb prime minister at Wolf's Crag; and it has ever been remarked that, though the masculine subject who pays the taxes sometimes growls at the courtiers by whom they are imposed, the said courtiers continue, nevertheless, welcome to the fair sex, to whom they furnish the newest small-talk and the earliest fashions. Both the dames were, therefore, at once about old Caleb's neck, setting up their throats together by way of welcome.

"Ay, sirs, Mr. Balderstone, and is this you? A sight of you is gude for sair een. Sit down—sit down; the gudeman will be blithe to see you—ye nar saw him sae cadgy in your life; but we are to christen our bit wean the night, as ye will hae heard, and doubtless ye will stay and see the ordinance. We hae killed a wether, and ane o' our lads has been out wi' his gun at the moss; ye used to like wild-fowl."

"Na, na, gudewife," said Caleb; "I just keekit in to wish ye joy, and I wad be glad to hae spoken wi' the gudeman, but——" moving, as if to go away.

"The ne'er a fit ye's gang," said the elder dame, laughing and holding him fast, with a freedom which belonged to their old acquaintance; "wha kens what ill it may bring to the bairn, if ye owerlook it in that gate?"

"But I'm in a preceese hurry, gudewife," said the butler, suffering himself to be dragged to a seat without much resistance; "and as to eating," for he observed the mistress of the dwelling bustling about to place a trencher for him—"as for eating—lack-a-day, we are just killed up yonder wi' eating frae morning to night! It's shamefu' epicurism; but that's what we hae gotten frae the English pock-puddings."

"Hout, never mind the English pock-puddings," said Luckie Lightbody; "try our puddings, Mr. Balderstone; there is black pudding and white-hass; try whilk ye like best."

"Baith gude—baith excellent—canna be better; but the very smell is eneugh for me that hae dined sae lately [the faithful wretch had fasted since daybreak]. But I wadna affront your housewifeskep, gudewife; and, with your per-

mission, I'se e'en pit them in my napkin, and eat them to my supper at e'en, for I am wearied of Mysie's pastry and nonsense; ye ken landward dainties aye pleased me best, Marion, and landward lasses too [looking at the cooper's wife]. Ne'er a bit but she looks far better than when she married Gilbert, and then she was the bonniest lass in our parochine and the neist till't. But gawsie cow, goodly calf."

The women smiled at the compliment each to herself, and they smiled again to each other as Caleb wrapped up the puddings in a towel which he had brought with him, as a dragoon carries his foraging bag to receive what may fall in his way.

"And what news at the castle?" quoth the gudewife.

"News! the bravest news ye ever heard—the Lord Keeper's up yonder wi' his fair daughter, just ready to fling her at my lord's head, if he winna tak her out o' his arms; and I'se warrant he'll stitch our auld lands of Ravenswood to her petticoat tail."

"Eh! sirs—ay!—and will he hae her? and is she weel-favored? and what's the color o' her hair? and does she wear a habit or a railly?" were the questions which the females showered upon the butler.

"Hout tout! it wad tak a man a day to answer a' your questions, and I hae hardly a minute. Where's the gudeman?"

"Awa' to fetch the minister," said Mrs. Girder, "precious Mr. Peter Bide-the-Bent, frae the Mosshead; the honest man has the rheumatism wi' lying in the hills in the persecution."

"Ay! a Whig and a mountain man, nae less!" said Caleb, with a peevishness he could not suppress. "I hae seen the day, Luckie, when worthy Mr. Cuffcushion and the service-book would hae served your turn [to the elder dame], or ony honest woman in like circumstances."

"And that's true too," said Mrs. Lightbody, "but what can a body do? Jean maun baith sing her psalms and busk her cockernony the gate the gudeman likes, and nae ither gate; for he's maister and mair at hame, I can tell ye, Mr. Balderstone."

"Ay, ay, and does he guide the gear too?" said Caleb, to whose projects masculine rule boded little good.

"Ilka penny on't; but he'll dress her as dink as a daisy, as ye see; sae she has little reason to complain: where there's ane better aff there's ten waur."

"Aweel, gudewife," said Caleb, crestfallen, but not beaten off, "that wasna the way ye guided your gudeman; but ilka land has its ain lauch. I maun be ganging. I just wanted

to round in the gudeman's lug, that I heard them say up-bye yonder that Peter Puncheon, that was cooper to the Queen's stores at the Timmer Burse at Leith, is dead; sae I thought that maybe a word frae my lord to the Lord Keeper might hae served Gilbert; but since he's frae hame——"

"O, but ye maun stay his hame-coming," said the dame. "I aye telled the gudeman ye meant weel to him; but he taks the tout at every bit lippening word."

"Aweel, I'll stay the last minute I can."

"And so," said the handsome young spouse of Mr. Girder, "ye think this Miss Ashton is weel-favored? Troth, and sae should she, to set up for our young lord, with a face and a hand, and a seat on his horse, that might become a king's son. D'ye ken that he aye glowers up at my window, Mr. Balderstone, when he chaunces to ride thro' the town? Sae I hae a right to ken what like he is, as weel as onybody."

"I ken that brawly," said Caleb, "for I hae heard his lordship say the cooper's wife had the blackest ee in the barony; and I said, 'Weel may that be, my lord, for it was her mither's afore her, as I ken to my cost.' Eh, Marion? Ha, ha, ha! Ah! these were merry days!"

"Hout awa', auld carle," said the old dame, "to speak sic daffing to young folk. But, Jean—fie, woman, dinna ye hear the bairn greet? I'se warrant it's that dreary weid has come ower't again."

Up got mother and grandmother, and scoured away, jostling each other as they ran, into some remote corner of the tenement, where the young hero of the evening was deposited. When Caleb saw the coast fairly clear, he took an invigorating pinch of snuff, to sharpen and confirm his resolution.

"Cauld be my cast," thought he, "if either Bide-the-Bent or Girder taste that broche of wild-fowl this evening;" and then addressing the eldest turnspit, a boy of about eleven years old, and putting a penny into his hand, he said, "Here is twal pennies, my man; carry that ower to Mrs. Sma'trash, and bid her fill my mill wi' snishing, and I'll turn the broche for ye in the mean time; and she will gie ye a ginge-bread snap for your pains."

No sooner was the elder boy departed on this mission than Caleb, looking the remaining turnspit gravely and steadily in the face, removed from the fire the spit bearing the wild-fowl of which he had undertaken the charge, clapped his hat on his head, and fairly marched off with it. He stopped at the door of the change-house only to say, in a few brief words, that Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw was not to expect a bed that evening in the castle.

If this message was too briefly delivered by Caleb, it became absolute rudeness when conveyed through the medium of a suburb landlady; and Bucklaw was, as a more calm and temperate man might have been, highly incensed. Captain Crainengelt proposed, with the unanimous applause of all present, that they should course the old fox (meaning Caleb) ere he got to cover, and toss him in a blanket. But Lockhard intimated to his master's servants and those of Lord Bittlebrains, in a tone of authority, that the slightest impertinence to the Master of Ravenswood's domestic would give Sir William Ashton the highest offence. And having so said, in a manner sufficient to prevent any aggression on their part, he left the public-house, taking along with him two servants loaded with such provisions as he had been able to procure, and overtook Caleb just when he had cleared the village.

CHAPTER XIII

Should I take aught of you ? 'Tis true I begged now ;
And what is worse than that, I stole a kindness ;
And, what is worst of all, I lost my way in't.

Wit without Money.

THE face of the little boy, sole witness of Caleb's infringement upon the laws at once of property and hospitality, would have made a good picture. He sat motionless, as if he had witnessed some of the spectral appearances which he had heard told of in a winter's evening ; and as he forgot his own duty, and allowed his spit to stand still, he added to the misfortunes of the evening by suffering the mutton to burn as black as a coal. He was first recalled from his trance of astonishment by a hearty cuff administered by Dame Lightbody, who, in whatever other respects she might conform to her name, was a woman strong of person, and expert in the use of her hands, as some say her deceased husband had known to his cost.

"What garr'd ye let the roast burn, ye ill-cleckit gude-for-naught ?"

"I dinna ken," said the boy.

"And where's that ill-deedy gett, Giles ?"

"I dinna ken," blubbered the astonished declarant.

"And where's Mr. Balderstone ?—and abune a', and in the name of council and kirk-session, that I suld say sae, where's the broche wi' the wild-fowl ?"

As Mrs. Girder here entered, and joined her mother's exclamations, screaming into one ear while the old lady deafened the other, they succeeded in so utterly confounding the unhappy urchin that he could not for some time tell his story at all, and it was only when the elder boy returned that the truth began to dawn on their minds.

"Weel, sirs," said Mrs. Lightbody, "wha wad hae thought o' Caleb Balderstone playing an auld acquaintance sic a pliskie !"

"O, weary on him !" said the spouse of Mr. Girder ; "and what am I to say to the gudeman ? He'll brain me, if there wasna anither woman in a' Wolf's Hope."

"Hout tout, silly queen," said the mother; "na, na, it's come to muckle, but it's no come to that neither; for an he brain you he maun brain me, and I have garr'd his betters stand back. Hands aff is fair play; we maunna heed a bit flyting."

The tramp of horses now announced the arrival of the cooper, with the minister. They had no sooner dismounted than they made for the kitchen fire, for the evening was cool after the thunderstorm, and the woods wet and dirty. The young gudewife, strong in the charms of her Sunday gown and biggonets, threw herself in the way of receiving the first attack, while her mother, like the veteran division of the Roman legion, remained in the rear, ready to support her in case of necessity. Both hoped to protract the discovery of what had happened—the mother, by interposing her bustling person betwixt Mr. Girder and the fire, and the daughter, by the extreme cordiality with which she received the minister and her husband, and the anxious fears which she expressed lest they should have "gotten cauld."

"Cauld!" quoth the husband, surlily, for he was not of that class of lords and masters whose wives are viceroys over them, "we'll be cauld eneugh, I think, if ye dinna let us in to the fire."

And so saying, he burst his way through both lines of defence; and, as he had a careful eye over his property of every kind, he perceived at one glance the absence of the spit with its savory burden. "What the deil, woman——"

"Fie for shame!" exclaimed both the women; "and before Mr. Bide-the-Bent!"

"I stand reproved," said the cooper; "but——"

"The taking in our mouths the name of the great enemy of our souls," said Mr. Bide-the-Bent——

"I stand reproved," said the cooper.

"—Is an exposing ourselves to his temptations," continued the reverend monitor, "and an inviting, or, in some sort, a compelling, of him to lay aside his other trafficking with unhappy persons, and wait upon those in whose speech his name is frequent."

"Weel, weel, Mr. Bide-the-Bent, can a man do mair than stand reproved?" said the cooper; "but just let me ask the women what for they hae dished the wild-fowl before we came."

"They arena dished, Gilbert," said his wife; "but—but an accident——"

"What accident?" said Girder, with flashing eyes. "Nae ill come ower them, I trust? Uh?"

His wife, who stood much in awe of him, durst not reply, but her mother bustled up to her support, with arms disposed as if they were about to be a-kimbo at the next reply. "I gied them to an acquaintance of mine, Gibbie Girder; and what about it now?"

Her excess of assurance struck Girder mute for an instant. "And *ye* gied the wild-fowl, the best end of our christening dinner, to a friend of yours, ye auld rudas! And what might *his* name be, I pray ye?"

"Just worthy Mr. Caleb Balderstone—frae Wolf's Crag," answered Marion, prompt and prepared for battle.

Girder's wrath foamed over all restraint. If there was a circumstance which could have added to the resentment he felt, it was that this extravagant donation had been made in favor of our friend Caleb, towards whom, for reasons to which the reader is no stranger, he nourished a decided resentment. He raised his riding-wand against the elder matron, but she stood firm, collected in herself, and undauntedly brandished the iron ladle with which she had just been "flambing" (*Anglicè*, basting) the roast of mutton. Her weapon was certainly the better, and her arm not the weakest of the two; so that Gilbert thought it safest to turn short off upon his wife, who had by this time hatched a sort of hysterical whine, which greatly moved the minister, who was in fact as simple and kind-hearted a creature as ever breathed. "And you, ye thowless jade, to sit still and see my substance disponed upon to an idle, drunken, reprobate, worm-eaten serving-man, just because he kittles the lugs o' a silly auld wife wi' useless clavers, and every twa words a lee? I'll gar you as gude——"

Here the minister interposed, both by voice and action, while Dame Lightbody threw herself in front of her daughter, and flourished her ladle.

"Am I no to chastise my ain wife?" exclaimed the cooper, very indignantly.

"Ye may chastise your ain wife if ye like," answered Dame Lightbody; "but ye shall never lay finger on my daughter, and that ye may found upon."

"For shame, Mr. Girder!" said the clergyman; "this is what I little expected to have seen of you, that you suld give rein to your sinful passions against your nearest and your dearest, and this night too, when ye are called to the most solemn duty of a Christian parent; and a' for what? For a redundancy of creature-comforts, as worthless as they are unneedful."

"Worthless!" exclaimed the cooper. "A better guse

never walkit on stubble; two finer, dentier wild ducks never wat a feather."

"Be it sae, neighbor," rejoined the minister; "but see what superfluities are yet revolving before your fire. I have seen the day when ten of the bannocks which stand upon that board would have been an acceptable dainty to as many men, that were starving on hills and bogs, and in caves of the earth, for the Gospel's sake."

"And that's what vexes me maist of a'," said the cooper, anxious to get some one to sympathize with his not altogether causeless anger; "an the queen had gien it to ony suffering sant, or to onybody ava but that reaving, lying, oppressing Tory villain, that rade in the wicked troop of militia when it was commanded out against the sants at Bothwell Brig by the auld tyrant Allan Ravenswood, that is gane to his place, I wad the less hae minded it. But to gie the principal part o' the feast to the like o' him——!"

"Aweel, Gilbert," said the minister, "and dinna ye see a high judgment in this? The seed of the righteous are not seen begging their bread: think of the son of a powerful oppressor being brought to the pass of supporting his household from your fulness."

"And, besides," said the wife, "it wasna for Lord Ravenswood neither, an he wad hear but a body speak: it was to help to entertain the Lord Keeper, as they ca' him, that's up yonder at Wolf's Crag."

"Sir William Ashton at Wolf's Crag!" ejaculated the astonished man of hoops and staves.

"And hand and glove wi' Lord Ravenswood," added Dame Lightbody.

"Doited idiot! that auld, clavering sneckdrawer wad gar ye trow the moon is made of green cheese. The Lord Keeper and Ravenswood! they are cat and dog, hare and hound."

"I tell ye they are man and wife, and gree better than some others that are sae," retorted the mother-in-law; "forbye, Peter Puncheon, that's cooper to the Queen's stores, is dead, and the place is to fill, and——"

"Od guide us, wull ye haud your skirling tongues!" said Girder,—for we are to remark, that this explanation was given like a catch for two voices, the younger dame, much encouraged by the turn of the debate, taking up and repeating in a higher tone the words as fast as they were uttered by her mother.

"The gudewife says naething but what's true, maister," said Girder's foreman, who had come in during the fray. "I

saw the Lord Keeper's servants drinking and driving ower at Luckie Sma'trash's, ower-bye yonder."

"And is their maister up at Wolf's Crag?" said Girder.

"Ay, troth is he," replied his man of confidence.

"And friends wi' Ravenswood?"

"It's like sae," answered the foreman, "since he is putting up wi' him."

"And Peter Puncheon's dead?"

"Ay, ay, Puncheon has leaked out at last, the auld carle," said the foreman; "mony a dribble o' brandy has gaen through him in his day. But as for the broche and the wild-fowl, the saddle's no aff your mare yet, maister, and I could follow and bring it back, for Mr. Balderstone's no far aff the town yet."

"Do say, Will; and come here, I'll tell ye what to do when ye owertake him."

He relieved the females of his presence, and gave Will his private instructions.

"A bonny-like thing," said the mother-in-law, as the cooper re-entered the apartment, "to send the innocent lad after an armed man, when ye ken Mr. Balderstone aye wears a rapier, and whiles a dirk into the bargain."

"I trust," said the minister, "ye have reflected weel on what ye have done, lest you should minister cause of strife, of which it is my duty to say, he who affordeth matter, albeit he himself striketh not, is in no manner guiltless."

"Never fash your beard, Mr. Bide-the-Bent," replied Girder; "ane canna get their breath out here between wives and ministers. I ken best how to turn my ain cake. Jean, serve up the dinner, and nae mair about it."

Nor did he again allude to the deficiency in the course of the evening.

Meantime, the foreman, mounted on his master's steed, and charged with his special orders, pricked swiftly forth in pursuit of the marauder Caleb. That personage, it may be imagined, did not linger by the way. He intermitted even his dearly-beloved chatter, for the purpose of making more haste, only assuring Mr. Lockhard that he had made the purveyor's wife give the wild-fowl a few turns before the fire, in case that Mysie, who had been so much alarmed by the thunder, should not have her kitchen-grate in full splendor. Meanwhile, alleging the necessity of being at Wolf's Crag as soon as possible, he pushed on so fast that his companions could scarce keep up with him. He began already to think he was safe from pursuit, having gained the summit of the

swelling eminence which divides Wolf's Crag from the village, when he heard the distant tread of a horse, and a voice which shouted at intervals, "Mr. Caleb—Mr. Balderstone—Mr. Caleb Balderstone—hollo—bide a wee!"

Caleb, it may be well believed, was in no hurry to acknowledge the summons. First, he would not hear it, and faced his companions down, that it was the echo of the wind; then he said it was not worth stopping for; and, at length, halting reluctantly, as the figure of the horseman appeared through the shades of the evening, he bent up his whole soul to the task of defending his prey, threw himself into an attitude of dignity, advanced the spit, which in his grasp might with its burden seem both spear and shield, and firmly resolved to die rather than surrender it.

What was his astonishment, when the cooper's foreman, riding up and addressing him with respect, told him, "His master was very sorry he was absent when he came to his dwelling, and grieved that he could not tarry the christening dinner; and that he had taen the freedom to send a sma' runlet of sack, and ane anker of brandy, as he understood there were guests at the castle, and that they were short of preparation."

I have heard somewhere a story of an elderly gentleman who was pursued by a bear that had gotten loose from its muzzle, until completely exhausted. In a fit of desperation, he faced round upon Bruin and lifted his cane; at the sight of which the instinct of discipline prevailed, and the animal, instead of tearing him to pieces, rose up upon his hind-legs and instantly began to shuffle a saraband. Not less than the joyful surprise of the senior, who had supposed himself in the extremity of peril from which he was thus unexpectedly relieved, was that of our excellent friend Caleb, when he found the pursuer intended to add to his prize, instead of bereaving him of it. He recovered his latitude, however, instantly, so soon as the foreman, stooping from his nag, where he sat perched betwixt the two barrels, whispered in his ear—"If onything about Peter Puncheon's place could be airted their way, John [Gibbie] Girder wad mak it better to the Master of Ravenswood than a pair of new gloves; and that he wad be blithe to speak wi' Maister Balderstone on that head, and he wad find him as pliant as a hoop-willow in a' that he could wish of him."

Caleb heard all this without rendering any answer, except that of all great men from Louis XIV. downwards, namely, "We will see about it;" and then added aloud, for the edifi-

cation of Mr. Lockhard—"Your master has acted with becoming civility and attention in forwarding the liquors, and I will not fail to represent it properly to my Lord Ravenswood. And, my lad," he said, "you may ride on to the castle, and if none of the servants are returned, whilk is to be dreaded, as they make day and night of it when they are out of sight, ye may put them into the porter's lodge, whilk is on the right hand of the great entry; the porter has got leave to go to see his friends, sae ye will meet no ane to steer ye."

The foreman, having received his orders, rode on; and having deposited the casks in the deserted and ruinous porter's lodge, he returned unquestioned by any one. Having thus executed his master's commission, and doffed his bonnet to Caleb and his company as he repassed them in his way to the village, he returned to have his share of the christening festivity.*

* See Raid of Caleb Balderstone. Note 5.

CHAPTER XIV

As, to the Autumn breeze's bugle sound,
Various and vague the dry leaves dance their round;
Or, from the garner-door, on ether borne,
The chaff flies devious from the winnow'd corn;
So vague, so devious, at the breath of heaven,
From their fix'd aim are mortal counsels driv'n.

Anonymous.

We left Caleb Balderstone in the extremity of triumph at the success of his various achievements for the honor of the house of Ravenswood. When he had mustered and marshalled his dishes of divers kinds, a more royal provision had not been seen in Wolf's Crag since the funeral feast of its deceased lord. Great was the glory of the serving-man, as he "decored" the old oaken table with a clean cloth, and arranged upon it carbonaded venison and roasted wild-fowl, with a glance, every now and then, as if to upbraid the incredulity of his master and his guests; and with many a story, more or less true, was Lockhard that evening regaled concerning the ancient grandeur of Wolf's Crag, and the sway of its barons over the country in their neighborhood.

"A vassal scarce held a calf or a lamb his ain, till he had first asked if the Lord of Ravenswood was pleased to accept it; and they were obliged to ask the lord's consent before they married in these days, and mony a merry tale they tell about that right as weel as others. And although," said Caleb, "these times are not like the gude old times, when authority had its right, yet true it is, Mr. Lockhard, and you yoursell may partly have remarked, that we of the house of Ravenswood do our endeavor in keeping up, by all just and lawful exertion of our baronial authority, that due and fitting connection betwixt superior and vassal, whilk is in some danger of falling into desuetude, owing to the general license and misrule of these present unhappy times."

"Umph!" said Mr. Lockhard; "and if I may inquire, Mr. Balderstone, pray do you find your people at the village yonder amenable? for I must needs say, that at Ravenswood Castle, now pertaining to my master, the Lord Keeper, ye have not left behind ye the most compliant set of tenantry."

"Ah! but Mr. Lockhard," replied Caleb, "ye must consider that there has been a change of hands, and the auld lord might expect twa turns frae them, when the new-comer canna get ane. A dour and fractious set they were, thae tenants of Ravenswood, and ill to live wi' when they dinna ken their master; and if your master put them mad ance, the whole country will not put them down."

"Troth," said Mr. Lockhard, "an such be the case, I think the wisest thing for us a' wad be to hammer up a match between your young lord and our winsome young leddy up-bye there; and Sir William might just stitch your auld barony to her gown-sleeve, and he wad sune cuitle another out o' somebody else, sic a lang head as he has."

Caleb shook his head. "I wish," he said—"I wish that may answer, Mr. Lockhard. There are auld prophecies about this house I wad like ill to see fulfilled wi' my auld een, that has seen evil eneugh already."

"Pshaw! never mind freits," said his brother butler; "if the young folk liked ane anither, they wad make a winsome couple. But, to say truth, there is a leddy sits in our hall-neuk, maun have her hand in that as weel as in every other job. But there's no harm in drinking to their healths, and I will fill Mrs. Mysie a cup of Mr. Girder's canary."

While they thus enjoyed themselves in the kitchen, the company in the hall were not less pleasantly engaged. So soon as Ravenswood had determined upon giving the Lord Keeper such hospitality as he had to offer, he deemed it incumbent on him to assume the open and courteous brow of a well-pleased host. It has been often remarked, that when a man commences by acting a character, he frequently ends by adopting it in good earnest. In the course of an hour or two, Ravenswood, to his own surprise, found himself in the situation of one who frankly does his best to entertain welcome and honored guests. How much of this change in his disposition was to be ascribed to the beauty and simplicity of Miss Ashton, to the readiness with which she accommodated herself to the inconveniences of her situation; how much to the smooth and plausible conversation of the Lord Keeper, remarkably gifted with those words which win the ear, must be left to the reader's ingenuity to conjecture. But Ravenswood was insensible to neither.

The Lord Keeper was a veteran statesman, well acquainted with courts and cabinets, and intimate with all the various turns of public affairs during the last eventful years of the

17th century. He could talk, from his own knowledge, of men and events, in a way which failed not to win attention, and had the peculiar art, while he never said a word which committed himself, at the same time to persuade the hearer that he was speaking without the least shadow of scrupulous caution or reserve. Ravenswood, in spite of his prejudices and real grounds of resentment, felt himself at once amused and instructed in listening to him, while the statesman, whose inward feelings had at first so much impeded his efforts to make himself known, had now regained all the ease and fluency of a silver-tongued lawyer of the very highest order.

His daughter did not speak much, but she smiled ; and what she did say argued a submissive gentleness, and a desire to give pleasure, which, to a proud man like Ravenswood, was more fascinating than the most brilliant wit. Above all, he could not but observe that, whether from gratitude or from some other motive, he himself, in his deserted and unprovided hall, was as much the object of respectful attention to his guests as he would have been when surrounded by all the appliances and means of hospitality proper to his high birth. All deficiencies passed unobserved, or, if they did not escape notice, it was to praise the substitutes which Caleb had contrived to supply the want of the usual accommodations. Where a smile was unavoidable, it was a very good-humored one, and often coupled with some well-turned compliment, to show how much the guests esteemed the merits of their noble host, how little they thought of the inconveniences with which they were surrounded. I am not sure whether the pride of being found to outbalance, in virtue of his own personal merit, all the disadvantages of fortune, did not make as favorable an impression upon the haughty heart of the Master of Ravenswood as the conversation of the father and the beauty of Lucy Ashton.

The hour of repose arrived. The Keeper and his daughter retired to their apartments, which were "decored" more properly than could have been anticipated. In making the necessary arrangements, Mysie had indeed enjoyed the assistance of a gossip who had arrived from the village upon an exploratory expedition, but had been arrested by Caleb, and impressed into the domestic drudgery of the evening ; so that, instead of returning home to describe the dress and person of the grand young lady, she found herself compelled to be active in the domestic economy of Wolf's Crag.

According to the custom of the time, the Master of Ravens-

wood attended the Lord Keeper to his apartment, followed by Caleb, who placed on the table, with all the ceremonials due to torches of wax, two rudely-framed tallow-candles, such as in those days were only used by the peasantry, hooped in paltry clasps of wire, which served for candlesticks. He then disappeared, and presently entered with two earthen flagons (the china, he said, had been little used since my lady's time), one filled with canary wine, the other with brandy.* The canary sack, unheeding all probabilities of detection, he declared had been twenty years in the cellars of Wolf's Crag, "though it was not for him to speak before their honors; the brandy—it was weel-kenned liquor, as mild as mead and as strong as Sampson; it had been in the house ever since the memorable revel, in which auld Micklestob had been slain at the head of the stair by Jamie of Jenklebrae, on account of the honor of the worshipful Lady Muirend, wha was in some sort an ally of the family; natheless——"

"But to cut that matter short, Mr. Caleb," said the Keeper, "perhaps you will favor me with a ewer of water."

"God forbid your lordship should drink water in this family," replied Caleb, "to the disgrace of so honorable a house!"

"Nevertheless, if his lordship have a fancy," said the Master, smiling, "I think you might indulge him; for, if I mistake not, there has been water drunk here at no distant date, and with good relish too."

"To be sure, if his lordship has a fancy," said Caleb; and re-entering with a jug of pure element—"He will scarce find such water onywhere as is drawn frae the well at Wolf's Crag; nevertheless——"

"Nevertheless, we must leave the Lord Keeper to his repose in this poor chamber of ours," said the Master of Ravenswood, interrupting his talkative domestic, who immediately turning to the doorway, with a profound reverence, prepared to usher his master from the secret chamber.

But the Lord Keeper prevented his host's departure. "I have but one word to say to the Master of Ravenswood, Mr. Caleb, and I fancy he will excuse your waiting."

With a second reverence, lower than the former, Caleb withdrew; and his master stood motionless, expecting, with considerable embarrassment, what was to close the events of a day fraught with unexpected incidents.

"Master of Ravenswood," said Sir William Ashton, with

* See Ancient Hospitality. Note 6.

some embarrassment, "I hope you understand the Christian law too well to suffer the sun to set upon your anger."

The Master blushed and replied, "He had no occasion that evening to exercise the duty enjoined upon him by his Christian faith."

"I should have thought otherwise," said his guest, "considering the various subjects of dispute and litigation which have unhappily occurred more frequently than was desirable or necessary betwixt the late honorable lord, your father, and myself."

"I could wish, my lord," said Ravenswood, agitated by suppressed emotion, "that reference to these circumstances should be made anywhere rather than under my father's roof."

"I should have felt the delicacy of this appeal at another time," said Sir William Ashton, "but now I must proceed with what I mean to say. I have suffered too much in my own mind, from the false delicacy which prevented my soliciting with earnestness, what indeed I frequently requested, a personal communing with your father: much distress of mind to him and to me might have been prevented."

"It is true," said Ravenswood, after a moment's reflection, "I have heard my father say your lordship had proposed a personal interview."

"Proposed, my dear Master? I did indeed propose it; but I ought to have begged, entreated, beseeched it. I ought to have torn away the veil which interested persons had stretched betwixt us, and shown myself as I was, willing to sacrifice a considerable part even of my legal rights, in order to conciliate feelings so natural as his must be allowed to have been. Let me say for myself, my young friend, for so I will call you, that had your father and I spent the same time together which my good fortune has allowed me to-day to pass in your company, it is possible the land might yet have enjoyed one of the most respectable of its ancient nobility, and I should have been spared the pain of parting in enmity from a person whose general character I so much admired and honored."

He put his handkerchief to his eyes. Ravenswood also was moved, but awaited in silence the progress of this extraordinary communication.

"It is necessary," continued the Lord Keeper, "and proper that you should understand, that there have been many points betwixt us, in which, although I judged it proper that there should be an exact ascertainment of my

legal rights by the decree of a court of justice, yet it was never my intention to press them beyond the verge of equity."

"My lord," said the Master of Ravenswood, "it is unnecessary to pursue this topic farther. What the law will give you, or has given you, you enjoy—or you shall enjoy; neither my father nor I myself would have received anything on the footing of favor."

"Favor! No, you misunderstand me," resumed the Keeper; "or rather you are no lawyer. A right may be good in law, and ascertained to be so, which yet a man of honor may not in every case care to avail himself of."

"I am sorry for it, my lord," said the Master.

"Nay, nay," retorted his guest, "you speak like a young counsellor; your spirit goes before your wit. There are many things still open for decision betwixt us. Can you blame me, an old man desirous of peace, and in the castle of a young nobleman who has saved my daughter's life and my own, that I am desirous, anxiously desirous, that these should be settled on the most liberal principles?"

The old man kept fast hold of the Master's passive hand as he spoke, and made it impossible for him, be his predetermination what it would, to return any other than an acquiescent reply; and wishing his guest good-night, he postponed farther conference until the next morning.

Ravenswood hurried into the hall, where he was to spend the night, and for a time traversed its pavement with a disordered and rapid pace. His mortal foe was under his roof, yet his sentiments towards him were neither those of a feudal enemy nor of a true Christian. He felt as if he could neither forgive him in the one character, nor follow forth his vengeance in the other, but that he was making a base and dishonorable composition betwixt his resentment against the father and his affection for his daughter. He cursed himself, as he hurried to and fro in the pale moonlight, and more ruddy gleams of the expiring wood-fire. He threw open and shut the latticed windows with violence, as if alike impatient of the admission and exclusion of free air. At length, however, the torrent of passion foamed off its madness, and he flung himself into the chair which he proposed as his place of repose for the night.

"If, in reality," such were the calmer thoughts that followed the first tempest of his passion—"if, in reality, this man desires no more than the law allows him—if he is willing to adjust even his acknowledged rights upon an equitable

footing, what could be my father's cause of complaint?—what is mine? Those from whom we won our ancient possessions fell under the sword of my ancestors, and left lands and livings to the conquerors; we sink under the force of the law, now too powerful for the Scottish chivalry. Let us parley with the victors of the day, as if we had been besieged in our fortress, and without hope of relief. This man may be other than I have thought him; and his daughter—but I have resolved not to think of her."

He wrapped his cloak around him, fell asleep, and dreamed of Lucy Ashton till daylight gleamed through the lattices

CHAPTER XV

We worldly men, when we see friends and kinsmen
Past hope sunk in their fortunes, lend no hand
To lift them up, but rather set our feet
Upon their heads to press them to the bottom,
As I must yield with you I practised it;
But now I see you in a way to rise,
I can and will assist you.

New Way to pay Old Debts.

THE Lord Keeper carried with him, to a couch harder than he was accustomed to stretch himself upon, the same ambitious thoughts and political perplexities which drive sleep from the softest down that ever spread a bed of state. He had sailed long enough amid the contending tides and currents of the time to be sensible of their peril, and of the necessity of trimming his vessel to the prevailing wind, if he would have her escape shipwreck in the storm. The nature of his talents, and the timorousness of disposition connected with them, had made him assume the pliability of the versatile old Earl of Northampton, who explained the art by which he kept his ground during all the changes of state, from the reign of Henry VIII. to that of Elizabeth, by the frank avowal, that he was born of the willow, not of the oak. It had accordingly been Sir William Ashton's policy, on all occasions, to watch the changes in the political horizon, and, ere yet the conflict was decided, to negotiate some interest for himself with the party most likely to prove victorious. His time-serving disposition was well known, and excited the contempt of the more daring leaders of both factions in the state. But his talents were of a useful and practical kind, and his legal knowledge held in high estimation; and they so far counterbalanced other deficiencies that those in power were glad to use and to reward, though without absolutely trusting or greatly respecting, him.

The Marquis of A—— had used his utmost influence to effect a change in the Scottish cabinet, and his schemes had been of late so well laid and so ably supported, that there appeared a very great chance of his proving ultimately suc-

cessful. He did not, however, feel so strong or so confident as to neglect any means of drawing recruits to his standard. The acquisition of the Lord Keeper was deemed of some importance, and a friend, perfectly acquainted with his circumstances and character, became responsible for his political conversion.

When this gentleman arrived at Ravenswood Castle upon a visit, the real purpose of which was disguised under general courtesy, he found the prevailing fear which at present beset the Lord Keeper was that of danger to his own person from the Master of Ravenswood. The language which the blind sibyl, Old Alice, had used; the sudden appearance of the Master, armed, and within his precincts, immediately after he had been warned against danger from him; the cold and haughty return received in exchange for the acknowledgments with which he loaded him for his timely protection, had all made a strong impression on his imagination.

So soon as the Marquis's political agent found how the wind sat, he began to insinuate fears and doubts of another kind, scarce less calculated to affect the Lord Keeper. He inquired with seeming interest, whether the proceedings in Sir William's complicated litigation with the Ravenswood family were out of court, and settled without the possibility of appeal. The Lord Keeper answered in the affirmative; but his interrogator was too well informed to be imposed upon. He pointed out to him, by unanswerable arguments, that some of the most important points which had been decided in his favor against the house of Ravenswood were liable, under the Treaty of Union, to be reviewed by the British House of Peers, a court of equity of which the Lord Keeper felt an instinctive dread. This course came instead of an appeal to the old Scottish Parliament, or, as it was technically termed, "a protestation for remeid in law."

The Lord Keeper, after he had for some time disputed the legality of such a proceeding, was compelled, at length, to comfort himself with the improbability of the young Master of Ravenswood's finding friends in parliament capable of stirring in so weighty an affair.

"Do not comfort yourself with that false hope," said his wily friend; "it is possible that, in the next session of Parliament, young Ravenswood may find more friends and favor even than your lordship."

"That would be a sight worth seeing," said the Keeper, scornfully.

"And yet," said his friend, "such things have been seen

ere now, and in our own time. There are many at the head of affairs even now that a few years ago were under hiding for their lives; and many a man now dines on plate of silver that was fain to eat his crowdy without a bicker; and many a high head has been brought full low among us in as short a space. Scott of Scotstarvet's *Staggering State of Scots Statesmen,* of which curious memoir you showed me a manuscript, has been outstaggered in our time."

The Lord Keeper answered with a deep sigh, "That these mutations were no new sights in Scotland, and had been witnessed long before the time of the satirical author he had quoted. It was many a long year," he said, "since Fordun had quoted as an ancient proverb, '*Neque dives, neque fortis, sed nec sapiens Scotus, prædominante invidia, diu durabit in terra.*'"

"And be assured, my esteemed friend," was the answer, "that even your long services to the state, or deep legal knowledge, will not save you, or render your estate stable, if the Marquis of A—— comes in with a party in the British Parliament. You know that the deceased Lord Ravenswood was his near ally, his lady being fifth in descent from the Knight of Tillibardine; and I am well assured that he will take young Ravenswood by the hand, and be his very good lord and kinsman. Why should he not? The Master is an active and stirring young fellow, able to help himself with tongue and hands; and it is such as he that finds friends among their kindred, and not those unarmed and unable Mephibosheths that are sure to be a burden to every one that takes them up. And so, if these Ravenswood cases be called over the coals in the House of Peers, you will find that the Marquis will have a crow to pluck with you."

"That would be an evil requital," said the Lord Keeper, "for my long services to the state, and the ancient respect in which I have held his lordship's honorable family and person."

"Ay, but," rejoined the agent of the Marquis, "it is in vain to look back on past service and auld respect, my lord; it will be present service and immediate proofs of regard which, in these sliddery times, will be expected by a man like the Marquis."

The Lord Keeper now saw the full drift of his friend's argument, but he was too cautious to return any positive answer.

"He knew not," he said, "the service which the Lord Marquis could expect from one of his limited abilities, that

had not always stood at his command, still saving and reserving his duty to his king and country."

Having thus said nothing, while he seemed to say everything, for the exception was calculated to cover whatever he might afterwards think proper to bring under it, Sir William Ashton changed the conversation, nor did he again permit the same topic to be introduced. His guest departed, without having brought the wily old statesman the length of committing himself, or of pledging himself to any future line of conduct, but with the certainty that he had alarmed his fears in a most sensible point, and laid a foundation for future and farther treaty.

When he rendered an account of his negotiation to the Marquis, they both agreed that the Keeper ought not to be permitted to relapse into security, and that he should be plied with new subjects of alarm, especially during the absence of his lady. They were well aware that her proud, vindictive, and predominating spirit would be likely to supply him with the courage in which he was deficient; that she was immovably attached to the party now in power, with whom she maintained a close correspondence and alliance; and that she hated, without fearing, the Ravenswood family (whose more ancient dignity threw discredit on the newly-acquired grandeur of her husband) to such a degree, that she would have perilled the interest of her own house to have the prospect of altogether crushing that of her enemy.

But Lady Ashton was now absent. The business which had long detained her in Edinburgh had afterwards induced her to travel to London, not without the hope that she might contribute her share to disconcert the intrigues of the Marquis at court; for she stood high in favor with the celebrated Sarah Duchess of Marlborough, to whom, in point of character, she bore considerable resemblance. It was necessary to press her husband hard before her return; and, as a preparatory step, the Marquis wrote to the Master of Ravenswood the letter which we rehearsed in a former chapter. It was cautiously worded, so as to leave it in the power of the writer hereafter to take as deep or as slight an interest in the fortunes of his kinsman as the progress of his own schemes might require. But however unwilling, as a statesman, the Marquis might be to commit himself, or assume the character of a patron, while he had nothing to give away, it must be said to his honor that he felt a strong inclination effectually to befriend the Master of Ravenswood, as well as to use his name as a means of alarming the terrors of the Lord Keeper.

As the messenger who carried this letter was to pass near the house of the Lord Keeper, he had it in direction that, in the village adjoining to the park-gate of the castle, his horse should lose a shoe, and that, while it was replaced by the smith of the place, he should express the utmost regret for the necessary loss of time, and in the vehemence of his impatience give it to be understood that he was bearing a message from the Marquis of A—— to the Master of Ravenswood upon a matter of life and death.

This news, with exaggerations, was speedily carried from various quarters to the ears of the Lord Keeper, and each reporter dwelt upon the extreme impatience of the courier, and the surprising short time in which he had executed his journey. The anxious statesman heard in silence; but in private Lockhard received orders to watch the courier on his return, to waylay him in the village, to ply him with liquor, if possible, and to use all means, fair or foul, to learn the contents of the letter of which he was the bearer. But as this plot had been foreseen, the messenger returned by a different and distant road, and thus escaped the snare that was laid for him.

After he had been in vain expected for some time, Mr. Dingwall had orders to make especial inquiry among his clients of Wolf's Hope, whether such a domestic belonging to the Marquis of A—— had actually arrived at the neighboring castle. This was easily ascertained; for Caleb had been in the village one morning by five o'clock, to borrow "twa chappins of ale and a kipper" for the messenger's refreshment, and the poor fellow had been ill for twenty-four hours at Luckie Sma'trash's, in consequence of dining upon "saut saumon and sour drink." So that the existence of a correspondence betwixt the Marquis and his distressed kinsman, which Sir William Ashton had sometimes treated as a bugbear, was proved beyond the possibility of farther doubt.

The alarm of the Lord Keeper became very serious; since the Claim of Right, the power of appealing from the decisions of the civil court to the Estates of Parliament, which had formerly been held incompetent, had in many instances been claimed, and in some allowed, and he had no small reason to apprehend the issue, if the English House of Lords should be disposed to act upon an appeal from the Master of Ravenswood "for remeid in law." It would resolve into an equitable claim, and be decided, perhaps, upon the broad principles of justice, which were not quite so favorable to the Lord Keeper as those of strict law. Besides, judging, though most inac-

curately, from courts which he had himself known in the unhappy times preceding the Scottish Union, the Keeper might have too much right to think that, in the House to which his lawsuits were to be transferred, the old maxim might prevail which was too well recognized in Scotland in former times—"Show me the man, and I'll show you the law." The high and unbiassed character of English judicial proceedings was then little known in Scotland, and the extension of them to that country was one of the most valuable advantages which it gained by the Union. But this was a blessing which the Lord Keeper, who had lived under another system, could not have the means of foreseeing. In the loss of his political consequence, he anticipated the loss of his lawsuit. Meanwhile, every report which reached him served to render the success of the Marquis's intrigues the more probable, and the Lord Keeper began to think it indispensable that he should look round for some kind of protection against the coming storm. The timidity of his temper induced him to adopt measures of compromise and conciliation. The affair of the wild bull, properly managed, might, he thought, be made to facilitate a personal communication and reconciliation betwixt the Master and himself. He would then learn, if possible, what his own ideas were of the extent of his rights, and the means of enforcing them; and perhaps matters might be brought to a compromise, where one party was wealthy and the other so very poor. A reconciliation with Ravenswood was likely to give him an opportunity to play his own game with the Marquis of A——. "And besides," said he to himself, "it will be an act of generosity to raise up the heir of this distressed family; and if he is to be warmly and effectually befriended by the new government, who knows but my virtue may prove its own reward?"

Thus thought Sir William Ashton, covering with no unusual self-delusion his interested views with a hue of virtue; and having attained this point, his fancy strayed still farther. He began to bethink himself, "That if Ravenswood was to have a distinguished place of power and trust, and if such a union would sopite the heavier part of his unadjusted claims, there might be worse matches for his daughter Lucy: the Master might be reponed against the attainder. Lord Ravenswood was an ancient title, and the alliance would, in some measure, legitimate his own possession of the greater part of the Master's spoils, and make the surrender of the rest a subject of less bitter regret."

With these mingled and multifarious plans occupying his

head, the Lord Keeper availed himself of my Lord Bittlebrains's repeated invitation to his residence, and thus came within a very few miles of Wolf's Crag. Here he found the lord of the mansion absent, but was courteously received by the lady, who expected her husband's immediate return. She expressed her particular delight at seeing Miss Ashton, and appointed the hounds to be taken out for the Lord Keeper's special amusement. He readily entered into the proposal, as giving him an opportunity to reconnoitre Wolf's Crag, and perhaps to make some acquaintance with the owner, if he should be tempted from his desolate mansion by the chase. Lockhard had his orders to endeavor on his part to make some acquaintance with the inmates of the castle, and we have seen how he played his part.

The accidental storm did more to further the Lord Keeper's plan of forming a personal acquaintance with young Ravenswood than his most sanguine expectations could have anticipated. His fear of the young nobleman's personal resentment had greatly decreased since he considered him as formidable from his legal claims and the means he might have of enforcing them. But although he thought, not unreasonably, that only desperate circumstances drove men on desperate measures, it was not without a secret terror, which shook his heart within him, that he first felt himself inclosed within the desolate Tower of Wolf's Crag; a place so well fitted, from solitude and strength, to be a scene of violence and vengeance. The stern reception at first given to them by the Master of Ravenswood, and the difficulty he felt in explaining to that injured nobleman what guests were under the shelter of his roof, did not soothe these alarms; so that, when Sir William Ashton heard the door of the courtyard shut behind him with violence, the words of Alice rung in his ears, "That he had drawn on matters too hardly with so fierce a race as those of Ravenswood, and that they would bide their time to be avenged."

The subsequent frankness of the Master's hospitality, as their acquaintance increased, abated the apprehensions these recollections were calculated to excite; and it did not escape Sir William Ashton, that it was to Lucy's grace and beauty he owed the change in their host's behavior.

All these thoughts thronged upon him when he took possession of the secret chamber. The iron lamp, the unfurnished apartment, more resembling a prison than a place of ordinary repose, the hoarse and ceaseless sound of the waves rushing against the base of the rock on which the castle was

founded, saddened and perplexed his mind. To his own successful machinations, the ruin of the family had been in a great measure owing, but his disposition was crafty, and not cruel; so that actually to witness the desolation and distress he had himself occasioned was as painful to him as it would be to the humane mistress of a family to superintend in person the execution of the lambs and poultry which are killed by her own directions. At the same time, when he thought of the alternative of restoring to Ravenswood a large proportion of his spoils, or of adopting, as an ally and member of his own family, the heir of this impoverished house, he felt as the spider may be supposed to do when his whole web, the intricacies of which had been planned with so much art, is destroyed by the chance sweep of a broom. And then, if he should commit himself too far in this matter, it gave rise to a perilous question, which many a good husband, when under temptation to act as a free agent, has asked himself without being able to return a satisfactory answer—"What will my wife—what will Lady Ashton say?" On the whole, he came at length to the resolution in which minds of a weaker cast so often take refuge. He resolved to watch events, to take advantage of circumstances as they occurred, and regulate his conduct accordingly. In this spirit of temporizing policy, he at length composed his mind to rest.

CHAPTER XVI

A slight note I have about me for you, for the delivery of which you must excuse me. It is an offer that friendship calls upon me to do, and no way offensive to you, since I desire nothing but right upon both sides.

King and no King.

WHEN Ravenswood and his guest met in the morning, the gloom of the Master's spirit had in part returned. He, also, had passed a night rather of reflection than of slumber; and the feelings which he could not but entertain towards Lucy Ashton had to support a severe conflict against those which he had so long nourished against her father. To clasp in friendship the hand of the enemy of his house, to entertain him under his roof, to exchange with him the courtesies and the kindness of domestic familiarity, was a degradation which his proud spirit could not be bent to without a struggle.

But the ice being once broken, the Lord Keeper was resolved it should not have time again to freeze. It had been part of his plan to stun and confuse Ravenswood's ideas, by a complicated and technical statement of the matters which had been in debate betwixt their families, justly thinking that it would be difficult for a youth of his age to follow the expositions of a practical lawyer, concerning actions of compt and reckoning, and of multiplepoindings, and adjudications and wadsets, proper and improper, and poindings of the ground, and declarations of the expiry of the legal. "Thus," thought Sir William, "I shall have all the grace of appearing perfectly communicative, while my party will derive very little advantage from anything I may tell him." He therefore took Ravenswood aside into the deep recess of a window in the hall, and resuming the discourse of the preceding evening, expressed a hope that his young friend would assume some patience, in order to hear him enter into a minute and explanatory detail of those unfortunate circumstances in which his late honorable father had stood at variance with the Lord Keeper. The Master of Ravenswood colored highly, but was silent; and the Lord Keeper, though not greatly approving the sudden heightening of his auditor's complexion, com-

menced the history of a bond for twenty thousand merks, advanced by his father to the father of Allan Lord Ravenswood, and was proceeding to detail the executorial proceedings by which this large sum had been rendered a *debitum fundi*, when he was interrupted by the Master.

"It is not in this place," he said, "that I can hear Sir William Ashton's explanation of the matters in question between us. It is not here, where my father died of a broken heart, that I can with decency or temper investigate the cause of his distress. I might remember that I was a son, and forget the duties of a host. A time, however, there must come, when these things shall be discussed in a place and in a presence where both of us will have equal freedom to speak and to hear."

"Any time," the Lord Keeper said, "any place, was alike to those who sought nothing but justice. Yet it would seem he was, in fairness, entitled to some premonition respecting the grounds upon which the Master proposed to impugn the whole train of legal proceedings, which had been so well and ripely advised in the only courts competent."

"Sir William Ashton," answered the Master, with warmth, "the lands which you now occupy were granted to my remote ancestor for services done with his sword against the English invaders. How they have glided from us by a train of proceedings that seem to be neither sale, nor mortgage, nor adjudication for debt, but a nondescript and entangled mixture of all these rights; how annual rent has been accumulated upon principal, and no nook or coign of legal advantage left unoccupied, until our interest in our hereditary property seems to have melted away like an icicle in thaw—all this you understand better than I do. I am willing, however, to suppose, from the frankness of your conduct towards me, that I may in a great measure have mistaken your personal character, and that things may have appeared right and fitting to you, a skilful and practiced lawyer, which to my ignorant understanding seem very little short of injustice and gross oppression."

"And you, my dear Master," answered Sir William—"you, permit me to say, have been equally misrepresented to me. I was taught to believe you a fierce, imperious, hot-headed youth, ready, at the slightest provocation, to throw your sword into the scales of justice, and to appeal to those rude and forcible measures from which civil polity has long protected the people of Scotland. Then, since we were mutually mistaken in each other, why should not the young

nobleman be willing to listen to the old lawyer, while, at least, he explains the points of difference betwixt them ?"

"No, my lord," answered Ravenswood; "it is in the House of British Peers,* whose honor must be equal to their rank—it is in the court of last resort that we must parley together. The belted lords of Britain, her ancient peers, must decide, if it is their will that a house, not the least noble of their members, shall be stripped of their possessions, the reward of the patriotism of generations, as the pawn of a wretched mechanic becomes forfeit to the usurer the instant the hour of redemption has passed away. If they yield to the grasping severity of the creditor, and to the gnawing usury that eats into our lands as moths into a raiment, it will be of more evil consequence to them and their posterity than to Edgar Ravenswood. I shall still have my sword and my cloak, and can follow the profession of arms wherever a trumpet shall sound."

As he pronounced these words, in a firm yet melancholy tone, he raised his eyes, and suddenly encountered those of Lucy Ashton, who had stolen unawares on their interview, and observed her looks fastened on them with an expression of enthusiastic interest and admiration, which had wrapped her for the moment beyond the fear of discovery. The noble form and fine features of Ravenswood, fired with the pride of birth and sense of internal dignity, the mellow and expressive tones of his voice, the desolate state of his fortunes, and the indifference with which he seemed to endure and to dare the worst that might befall, rendered him a dangerous object of contemplation for a maiden already too much disposed to dwell upon recollections connected with him. When their eyes encountered each other, both blushed deeply, conscious of some strong internal emotion, and shunned again to meet each other's look.

Sir William Ashton had, of course, closely watched the expression of their countenances. "I need fear," said he internally, "neither Parliament nor protestation; I have an effectual mode of reconciling myself with this hot-tempered young fellow, in case he shall become formidable. The present object is, at all events, to avoid committing ourselves. The hook is fixed; we will not strain the line too soon: it is as well to reserve the privilege of slipping it loose, if we do not find the fish worth landing."

In this selfish and cruel calculation upon the supposed attachment of Ravenswood to Lucy, he was so far from consid-

* See Appeal to Parliamen . Note 7.

ering the pain he might give to the former, by thus dallying with his affections, that he even did not think upon the risk of involving his own daughter in the perils of an unfortunate passion; as if her predilection, which could not escape his attention, were like the flame of a taper, which might be lighted or extinguished at pleasure. But Providence had prepared a dreadful requital for this keen observer of human passions, who had spent his life in securing advantages to himself by artfully working upon the passions of others.

Caleb Balderstone now came to announce that breakfast was prepared; for in those days of substantial feeding, the relics of the supper amply furnished forth the morning meal. Neither did he forget to present to the Lord Keeper, with great reverence, a morning draught in a large pewter cup, garnished with leaves of parsley and scurvy-grass. He craved pardon, of course, for having omitted to serve it in the great silver standing cup as behoved, being that it was at present in a silversmith's in Edinburgh, for the purpose of being overlaid with gilt.

"In Edinburgh like enough," said Ravenswood; "but in what place, or for what purpose, I am afraid neither you nor I know."

"Aweel!" said Caleb, peevishly, "there's a man standing at the gate already this morning—that's ae thing that I ken. Does your honor ken whether ye will speak wi' him or no?"

"Does he wish to speak with me, Caleb?"

"Less will no serve him," said Caleb; "but ye had best take a visie of him through the wicket before opening the gate; it's no every ane we suld let into this castle."

"What! do you suppose him to be a messenger come to arrest me for debt?" said Ravenswood.

"A messenger arrest your honor for debt, and in your Castle of Wolf's Crag! Your honor is jesting wi' auld Caleb this morning." However, he whispered in his ear, as he followed him out, "I would be loth to do ony decent man a prejudice in your honor's gude opinion; but I would tak twa looks o' that chield before I let him within these walls."

He was not an officer of the law, however; being no less a person than Captain Craigengelt, with his nose as red as a comfortable cup of brandy could make it, his laced cocked hat set a little aside upon the top of his black riding periwig, a sword by his side and pistols at his holsters, and his person arrayed in a riding suit, laid over with tarnished lace—the very moral of one who would say, "Stand to a true man."

When the Master had recognized him, he ordered the gates

to be opened. "I suppose," he said, "Captain Craigengelt, there are no such weighty matters betwixt you and me, but may be discussed in this place. I have company in the castle at present, and the terms upon which we last parted must excuse my asking you to make part of them."

Craigengelt, although possessing the very perfection of impudence, was somewhat abashed by this unfavorable reception. "He had no intention," he said, "to force himself upon the Master of Ravenswood's hospitality; he was in the honorable service of bearing a message to him from a friend, otherwise the Master of Ravenswood should not have had reason to complain of this intrusion."

"Let it be short, sir," said the Master, "for that will be the best apology. Who is the gentleman who is so fortunate as to have your services as a messenger?"

"My friend, Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw," answered Craigengelt, with conscious importance, and that confidence which the acknowledged courage of his principal inspired, "who conceives himself to have been treated by you with something much short of the respect which he had reason to demand, and therefore is resolved to exact satisfaction. I bring with me," said he, taking a piece of paper out of his pocket, "the precise length of his sword; and he requests you will meet him, accompanied by a friend, and equally armed, at any place within a mile of the castle, when I shall give attendance as umpire, or second, on his behoof."

"Satisfaction! and equal arms!" repeated Ravenswood, who, the reader will recollect, had no reason to suppose he had given the slightest offence to his late inmate; "upon my word, Captain Craigengelt, either you have invented the most improbable falsehood that ever came into the mind of such a person, or your morning draught has been somewhat of the strongest. What could persuade Bucklaw to send me such a message?"

"For that, sir," replied Craigengelt, "I am desired to refer you to what, in duty to my friend, I am to term your inhospitality in excluding him from your house, without reasons assigned."

"It is impossible," replied the Master; "he cannot be such a fool as to interpret actual necessity as an insult. Nor do I believe that, knowing my opinion of you, Captain, he would have employed the services of so slight and inconsiderable a person as yourself upon such an errand, as I certainly could expect no man of honor to act with you in the office of umpire."

"I slight and inconsiderable!" said Craigengelt, raising his voice, and laying his hand on his cutlass; "if it were not that the quarrel of my friend craves the precedence, and is in dependence before my own, I would give you to understand——"

"I can understand nothing upon your explanation, Captain Craigengelt. Be satisfied of that, and oblige me with your departure."

"D——n!" muttered the bully; "and is this the answer which I am to carry back to an honorable message?"

"Tell the Laird of Bucklaw," answered Ravenswood, "if you are really sent by him, that, when he sends me his cause of grievance by a person fitting to carry such an errand betwixt him and me, I will either explain it or maintain it."

"Then, Master, you will at least cause to be returned to Hayston, by my hands, his property which is remaining in your possession."

"Whatever property Bucklaw may have left behind him, sir," replied the Master, "shall be returned to him by my servant, as you do not show me any credentials from him which entitle you to receive it."

"Well, Master," said Captain Craigengelt, with malice which even his fear of the consequences could not suppress, "you have this morning done me an egregious wrong and dishonor, but far more to yourself. A castle indeed!" he continued, looking around him; "why, this is worse than a *coupe-gorge* house, where they receive travellers to plunder them of their property."

"You insolent rascal," said the Master, raising his cane, and making a grasp at the Captain's bridle, "if you do not depart without uttering another syllable, I will batoon you to death!"

At the motion of the Master towards him, the bully turned so rapidly round, that with some difficulty he escaped throwing down his horse, whose hoofs struck fire from the rocky pavement in every direction. Recovering him, however, with the bridle, he pushed for the gate, and rode sharply back again in the direction of the village.

As Ravenswood turned round to leave the courtyard after this dialogue, he found that the Lord Keeper had descended from the hall, and witnessed, though at the distance prescribed by politeness, his interview with Craigengelt.

"I have seen," said the Lord Keeper, "that gentleman's face, and at no great distance of time; his name is Craig—Craig—something, is it not?"

"Craigengelt is the fellow's name," said the Master, "at least that by which he passes at present."

"Craig-in-guilt," said Caleb, punning upon the word "craig," which in Scotch signifies throat; "if he is Craig-in-guilt just now, he is likely to be Craig-in-peril as ony chield I ever saw; the loon has woodie written on his very visnomy, and I wad wager twa and a plack that hemp plaits his cravat yet."

"You understand physiognomy, good Mr. Caleb," said the Keeper, smiling; "I assure you the gentleman has been near such a consummation before now; for I most distinctly recollect that, upon occasion of a journey which I made about a fortnight ago to Edinburgh, I saw Mr. Craigengelt, or whatever is his name, undergo a severe examination before the privy council."

"Upon what account?" said the Master of Ravenswood, with some interest.

The question led immediately to a tale which the Lord Keeper had been very anxious to introduce, when he could find a graceful and fitting opportunity. He took hold of the Master's arm, and led him back towards the hall. "The answer to your question," he said, "though it is a ridiculous business, is only fit for your own ear."

As they entered the hall, he again took the Master apart into one of the recesses of the window, where it will be easily believed that Miss Ashton did not venture again to intrude upon their conference.

CHAPTER XVII

Here is a father now,
Will truck his daughter for a foreign venture,
Make her the stop-gap to some canker'd feud,
Or fling her o'er, like Jonah, to the fishes,
To appease the sea at highest.

Anonymous.

THE Lord Keeper opened his discourse with an appearance of unconcern, marking, however, very carefully, the effect of his communication upon young Ravenswood.

"You are aware," he said, "my young friend, that suspicion is the natural vice of our unsettled times, and exposes the best and wisest of us to the imposition of artful rascals. If I had been disposed to listen to such the other day, or even if I had been the wily politician which you have been taught to believe me, you, Master of Ravenswood, instead of being at freedom, and with full liberty to solicit and act against me as you please, in defence of what you suppose to be your rights, would have been in the Castle of Edinburgh, or some other state prison; or, if you had escaped that destiny, it must have been by flight to a foreign country, and at the risk of a sentence of fugitation."

"My Lord Keeper," said the Master, "I think you would not jest on such a subject; yet it seems impossible you can be in earnest."

"Innocence," said the Lord Keeper, "is also confident, and sometimes, though very excusably, presumptuously so."

"I do not understand," said Ravenswood, "how a consciousness of innocence can be, in any case, accounted presumptuous."

"Imprudent, at least, it may be called," said Sir William Ashton, "since it is apt to lead us into the mistake of supposing that sufficiently evident to others of which, in fact, we are only conscious ourselves. I have known a rogue, for this very reason, make a better defence than an innocent man could have done in the same circumstances of suspicion. Having no consciousness of innocence to support him, such a fellow applies himself to all the advantages which the law

will afford him, and sometimes—if his counsel be men of talent—succeeds in compelling his judges to receive him as innocent. I remember the celebrated case of Sir Coolie Condiddle of Condiddle, who was tried for theft under trust, of which all the world knew him guilty, and yet was not only acquitted, but lived to sit in judgment on honester folk."

"Allow me to beg you will return to the point," said the Master; "you seemed to say that I had suffered under some suspicion."

"Suspicion, Master! Ay, truly, and I can show you the proofs of it; if I happen only to have them with me. Here, Lockhard." His attendant came. "Fetch me the little private mail with the padlocks, that I recommended to your particular charge, d'ye hear?"

"Yes, my lord." Lockhard vanished; and the Keeper continued, as if half speaking to himself.

"I think the papers are with me—I think so, for, as I was to be in this country, it was natural for me to bring them with me. I have them, however, at Ravenswood Castle, that I am sure of; so perhaps you might condescend——"

Here Lockhard entered and put the leathern scrutoire, or mail-box, into his hands. The Keeper produced one or two papers, respecting the information laid before the privy council concerning the riot, as it was termed, at the funeral of Allan Lord Ravenswood, and the active share he had himself taken in quashing the proceedings against the Master. These documents had been selected with care, so as to irritate the natural curiosity of Ravenswood upon such a subject, without gratifying it, yet to show that Sir William Ashton had acted upon that trying occasion the part of an advocate and peacemaker betwixt him and the jealous authorities of the day. Having furnished his host with such subjects for examination, the Lord Keeper went to the breakfast-table, and entered into light conversation, addressed partly to old Caleb, whose resentment against the usurper of the Castle of Ravenswood began to be softened by his familiarity, and partly to his daughter.

After perusing these papers, the Master of Ravenswood remained for a minute or two with his hand pressed against his brow, in deep and profound meditation. He then again ran his eye hastily over the papers, as if desirous of discovering in them some deep purpose, or some mark of fabrication, which had escaped him at first perusal. Apparently the second reading confirmed the opinion which had pressed upon

him at the first, for he started from the stone bench on which he was sitting, and, going to the Lord Keeper, took his hand, and, strongly pressing it, asked his pardon repeatedly for the injustice he had done him, when it appeared he was experiencing, at his hands, the benefit of protection to his person and vindication to his character.

The statesman received these acknowledgments at first with well-feigned surprise, and then with an affectation of frank cordiality. The tears began already to start from Lucy's blue eyes at viewing this unexpected and moving scene. To see the Master, late so haughty and reserved, and whom she had always supposed the injured person, supplicating her father for forgiveness, was a change at once surprising, flattering, and affecting.

"Dry your eyes, Lucy," said her father; "why should you weep, because your father, though a lawyer, is discovered to be a fair and honorable man? What have you to thank me for, my dear Master," he continued, addressing Ravenswood, "that you would not have done in my case? '*Suum cuique tribuito,*' was the Roman justice, and I learned it when I studied Justinian. Besides, have you not overpaid me a thousand times, in saving the life of this dear child?"

"Yes," answered the Master, in all the remorse of self-accusation; "but the little service *I* did was an act of mere brutal instinct; *your* defence of my cause, when you knew how ill I thought of you, and how much I was disposed to be your enemy, was an act of generous, manly, and considerate wisdom."

"Pshaw!" said the Lord Keeper, "each of us acted in his own way; you as a gallant soldier, I as an upright judge and privy-councillor. We could not, perhaps, have changed parts; at least I should have made a very sorry tauridor, and you, my good Master, though your cause is so excellent, might have pleaded it perhaps worse yourself than I who acted for you before the council."

"My generous friend!" said Ravenswood; and with that brief word, which the Keeper had often lavished upon him, but which he himself now pronounced for the first time, he gave to his feudal enemy the full confidence of a haughty but honorable heart. The Master had been remarked among his contemporaries for sense and acuteness, as well as for his reserved, pertinacious, and irascible character. His prepossessions accordingly, however obstinate, were of a nature to give way before love and gratitude; and the real charms of the daughter, joined to the supposed services of the father,

cancelled in his memory the vows of vengeance which he had taken so deeply on the eve of his father's funeral. But they had been heard and registered in the book of fate.

Caleb was present at this extraordinary scene, and he could conceive no other reason for a proceeding so extraordinary than an alliance betwixt the houses, and Ravenswood Castle assigned for the young lady's dowry. As for Lucy, when Ravenswood uttered the most passionate excuses for his ungrateful negligence, she could but smile through her tears, and, as she abandoned her hand to him, assure him, in broken accents, of the delight with which she beheld the complete reconciliation between her father and her deliverer. Even the statesman was moved and affected by the fiery, unreserved, and generous self-abandonment with which the Master of Ravenswood renounced his feudal enmity and threw himself without hesitation upon his forgiveness. His eyes glistened as he looked upon a couple who were obviously becoming attached, and who seemed made for each other. He thought how high the proud and chivalrous character of Ravenswood might rise under many circumstances in which *he* found himself "overcrowed," to use a phrase of Spenser, and kept under, by his brief pedigree, and timidity of disposition. Then his daughter—his favorite child—his constant playmate—seemed formed to live happy in a union with such a commanding spirit as Ravenswood ; and even the fine, delicate, fragile form of Lucy Ashton seemed to require the support of the Master's muscular strength and masculine character. And it was not merely during a few minutes that Sir William Ashton looked upon their marriage as a probable and even desirable event, for a full hour intervened ere his imagination was crossed by recollection of the Master's poverty, and the sure displeasure of Lady Ashton. It is certain, that the very unusual flow of kindly feeling with which the Lord Keeper had been thus surprised, was one of the circumstances which gave much tacit encouragement to the attachment between the Master and his daughter, and led both the lovers distinctly to believe that it was a connection which would be most agreeable to him. He himself was supposed to have admitted this in effect, when, long after the catastrophe of their love, he used to warn his hearers against permitting their feelings to obtain an ascendency over their judgment, and affirm, that the greatest misfortune of his life was owing to a very temporary predominance of sensibility over self-interest. It must be owned, if such was the case, he was long and severely punished for an offence of very brief duration.

After some pause, the Lord Keeper resumed the conversation. "In your surprise at finding me an honester man than you expected, you have lost your curiosity about this Craigengelt, my good Master; and yet your name was brought in, in the course of that matter too."

"The scoundrel!" said Ravenswood. "My connection with him was of the most temporary nature possible; and yet I was very foolish to hold any communication with him at all. What did he say of me?"

"Enough," said the Keeper, "to excite the very loyal terrors of some of our sages, who are for proceeding against men on the mere grounds of suspicion or mercenary information. Some nonsense about your proposing to enter into the service of France, or of the Pretender, I don't recollect which, but which the Marquis of A——, one of your best friends, and another person, whom some call one of your worst and most interested enemies, could not, somehow, be brought to listen to."

"I am obliged to my honorable friend; and yet," shaking the Lord Keeper's hand—"and yet I am still more obliged to my honorable enemy."

"*Inimicus amicissimus*," said the Lord Keeper, returning the pressure; "but this gentleman—this Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw—I am afraid the poor young man—I heard the fellow mention his name—is under very bad guidance."

"He is old enough to govern himself," answered the Master.

"Old enough, perhaps, but scarce wise enough, if he has chosen this fellow for his *fidus Achates*. Why, he lodged an information against him—that is, such a consequence might have ensued from his examination, had we not looked rather at the character of the witness than the tenor of his evidence."

"Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw," said the Master, "is, I believe, a most honorable man, and capable of nothing that is mean or disgraceful."

"Capable of much that is unreasonable, though; that you must needs allow, Master. Death will soon put him in possession of a fair estate, if he hath it not already; old Lady Girnington—an excellent person, excepting that her inveterate ill-nature rendered her intolerable to the whole world—is probably dead by this time. Six heirs portioners have successively died to make her wealthy. I know the estates well; they march with my own—a noble property."

"I am glad of it," said Ravenswood, "and should be more

so, were I confident that Bucklaw would change his company and habits with his fortune. This appearance of Craigengelt, acting in the capacity of his friend, is a most vile augury for his future respectability."

"He is a bird of evil omen, to be sure," said the Keeper, "and croaks of jail and gallows-tree. But I see Mr. Caleb grows impatient for our return to breakfast."

CHAPTER XVIII

Sir, stay at home and take an old man's counsel;
Seek not to bask you by a stranger's hearth;
Our own blue smoke is warmer than their fire.
Domestic food is wholesome, though 'tis homely,
And foreign dainties poisonous, though tasteful.

The French Courtezan.

THE Master of Ravenswood took an opportunity to leave his guests to prepare for their departure, while he himself made the brief arrangements necessary previous to his absence from Wolf's Crag for a day or two. It was necessary to communicate with Caleb on this occasion, and he found that faithful servitor in his sooty and ruinous den, greatly delighted with the departure of their visitors, and computing how long, with good management, the provisions which had been unexpended might furnish forth the Master's table. "He's nae belly god, that's ae blessing; and Bucklaw's gane, that could have eaten a horse behind the saddle. Cresses or water-purpie, and a bit ait-cake, can serve the Master for breakfast as well as Caleb. Then for dinner—there's no muckle left on the spule-bane; it will brander, though—it will brander very weel."

His triumphant calculations were interrupted by the Master, who communicated to him, not without some hesitation, his purpose to ride with the Lord Keeper as far as Ravenswood Castle, and to remain there for a day or two.

"The mercy of Heaven forbid!" said the old serving-man, turning as pale as the table-cloth which he was folding up.

"And why, Caleb?" said his master—"why should the mercy of Heaven forbid my returning the Lord Keeper's visit?"

"Oh, sir!" replied Caleb—"O, Mr. Edgar! I am your servant, and it ill becomes me to speak; but I am an auld servant—have served baith your father and gudesire, and mind to have seen Lord Randal, your great-grandfather, but that was when I was a bairn."

"And what of all this, Balderstone?" said the Master; "what can it possibly have to do with my paying some ordinary civility to a neighbor?"

"O, Mr. Edgar,—that is, my lord!" answered the butler, "your ain conscience tells you it isna for your father's son to be neighboring wi' the like o' him; it is na for the credit of the family. An he were ance come to terms, and to gie ye back your ain, e'en though ye suld honor his house wi' your alliance, I suldna say na; for the young leddy is a winsome sweet creature. But keep your ain state wi' them—I ken the race o' them weel—they will think the mair o' ye."

"Why, now, you go farther than I do, Caleb," said the Master, drowning a certain degree of consciousness in a forced laugh; "you are for marrying me into a family that you will not allow me to visit, how's this? and you look as pale as death besides."

"O, sir," repeated Caleb again, "you would but laugh if I tauld it; but Thomas the Rhymer, whose tongue couldna be fause, spoke the word of your house that will e'en prove ower true if you go to Ravenswood this day. O, that it should e'er have been fulfilled in my time!"

"And what is it, Caleb?" said Ravenswood, wishing to soothe the fears of his old servant.

Caleb replied, "He had never repeated the lines to living mortal; they were told to him by an auld priest that had been confessor to Lord Allan's father when the family were Catholic. But mony a time," he said, "I hae soughed thae dark words ower to mysell, and, well-a-day! little did I think of their coming round this day."

"Truce with your nonsense, and let me hear the doggerel which has put it into your head," said the Master, impatiently.

With a quivering voice, and a cheek pale with apprehension, Caleb faltered out the following lines:

"'When the last Laird of Ravenswood to Ravenswood shall ride,
And woo a dead maiden to be his bride,
He shall stable his steed in the Kelpie's flow,
And his name shall be lost forevermoe!'"

"I know the Kelpie's flow well enough," said the Master; "I suppose, at least, you mean the quicksand betwixt this tower and Wolf's Hope; but why any man in his senses should stable a steed there——"

"O, never speer onything about that, sir—God forbid we should ken what the prophecy means—but just bide you at hame, and let the strangers ride to Ravenswood by themselves. We have done eneugh for them; and to do mair would be mair against the credit of the family than in its favor."

"Well, Caleb," said the Master, "I give you the best possible credit for your good advice on this occasion; but as I do not go to Ravenswood to seek a bride, dead or alive, I hope I shall choose a better stable for my horse than the Kelpie's quicksand, and especially as I have always had a particular dread of it since the patrol of dragoons were lost there ten years since. My father and I saw them from the tower struggling against the advancing tide, and they were lost long before any help could reach them."

"And they deserved it weel, the southern loons!" said Caleb; "what had they ado capering on our sands, and hindering a wheen honest folk frae bringing on shore a drap brandy? I hae seen them that busy, that I wad hae fired the auld culverin or the demi-saker that's on the south bartizan at them, only I was feared they might burst in the ganging aff."

Caleb's brain was now fully engaged with abuse of the English soldiery and excisemen, so that his master found no great difficulty in escaping from him and rejoining his guests. All was now ready for their departure; and one of the Lord Keeper's grooms having saddled the Master's steed, they mounted in the courtyard.

Caleb had, with much toil, opened the double doors of the outward gate, and thereat stationed himself, endeavoring, by the reverential, and at the same time consequential, air which he assumed, to supply, by his own gaunt, wasted, and thin person, the absence of a whole baronial establishment of porters, warders, and liveried menials.

The Keeper returned his deep reverence with a cordial farewell, stooping at the same time from his horse, and sliding into the butler's hand the remuneration which in those days was always given by a departing guest to the domestics of the family where he had been entertained. Lucy smiled on the old man with her usual sweetness, bade him adieu, and deposited her guerdon with a grace of action and a gentleness of accent which could not have failed to have won the faithful retainer's heart, but for Thomas the Rhymer, and the successful lawsuit against his master. As it was, he might have adopted the language of the Duke in *As You Like It*—

> Thou wouldst have better pleased me with this deed,
> If thou hadst told me of another father.

Ravenswood was at the lady's bridle-rein, encouraging her timidity, and guiding her horse carefully down the rocky path which led to the moor, when one of the servants announced

from the rear that Caleb was calling loudly after them, desiring to speak with his master. Ravenswood felt it would look singular to neglect this summons, although inwardly cursin Caleb for his impertinent officiousness; therefore he was compelled to relinquish to Mr. Lockhard the agreeable duty in which he was engaged, and to ride back to the gate of the courtyard. Here he was beginning, somewhat peevishly, to ask Caleb the cause of his clamor, when the good old man exclaimed, "Whisht, sir!—whisht, and let me speak just ae word that I couldna say afore folk; there [putting into his lord's hand the money he had just received]—there's three gowd pieces; and ye'll want siller up-bye yonder. But stay, whisht now!" for the Master was beginning to exclaim against this transference, "never say a word, but just see to get them changed in the first town ye ride through, for they are bran new frae the mint, and kenspeckle a wee bit."

"You forget, Caleb," said his master, striving to force back the money on his servant, and extricate the bridle from his hold—"you forget that I have some gold pieces left of my own. Keep these to yourself, my old friend; and, once more, good-day to you. I assure you, I have plenty. You know you have managed that our living should cost us little or nothing."

"Aweel," said Caleb, "these will serve for you another time; but see ye hae eneugh, for, doubtless, for the credit of the family, there maun be some civility to the servants, and ye maun hae something to mak a show with when they say, 'Master, will you bet a broad piece?' Then ye maun tak out your purse, and say, 'I carena if I do;' and tak care no to agree on the articles of the wager, and just put up your purse again, and——"

"This is intolerable, Caleb; I really must be gone."

"And you will go, then?" said Caleb, loosening his hold upon the Master's cloak, and changing his didactics into a pathetic and mournful tone—"and you *will* go, for a' I have told you about the prophecy, and the dead bride, and the Kelpie's quicksand? Aweel! a wilful man maun hae his way: he that will to Cupar maun to Cupar. But pity of your life, sir, if ye be fowling or shooting in the Park, beware of drinking at the Mermaiden's Well—— He's gane! he's down the path arrow-flight after her! The head is as clean taen aff the Ravenswood family this day as I wad chap the head aff a sybo!"

The old butler looked long after his master, often clearing away the dew as it rose to his eyes, that he might, as long as

possible, distinguish his stately form from those of the other horsemen. "Close to her bridle-rein—ay, close to her bridle-rein! Wisely saith the holy man, 'By this also you may know that woman hath dominion over all men;' and without this lass would not our ruin have been a'thegither fulfilled."

With a heart fraught with such sad auguries did Caleb return to his necessary duties at Wolf's Crag, as soon as he could no longer distinguish the object of his anxiety among the group of riders, which diminished in the distance.

In the mean time the party pursued their route joyfully. Having once taken his resolution, the Master of Ravenswood was not of a character to hesitate or pause upon it. He abandoned himself to the pleasure he felt in Miss Ashton's company, and displayed an assiduous gallantry which approached as nearly to gayety as the temper of his mind and state of his family permitted. The Lord Keeper was much struck with his depth of observation, and the unusual improvement which he had derived from his studies. Of these accomplishments Sir William Ashton's profession and habits of society rendered him an excellent judge; and he well knew how to appreciate a quality to which he himself was a total stranger—the brief and decided dauntlessness of the Master of Ravenswood's disposition, who seemed equally a stranger to doubt and to fear. In his heart the Lord Keeper rejoiced at having conciliated an adversary so formidable, while, with a mixture of pleasure and anxiety, he anticipated the great things his young companion might achieve, were the breath of court-favor to fill his sails.

"What could she desire," he thought, his mind always conjuring up opposition in the person of Lady Ashton to his now prevailing wish—"what could a woman desire in a match more than the sopiting of a very dangerous claim, and the alliance of a son-in-law, noble, brave, well-gifted, and highly connected; sure to float whenever the tide sets his way; strong, exactly where we are weak, in pedigree and in the temper of a swordsman? Sure, no reasonable woman would hesitate. But, alas——!" Here his argument was stopped by the consciousness that Lady Ashton was not always reasonable, in his sense of the word. "To prefer some clownish Merse laird to the gallant young nobleman, and to the secure possession of Ravenswood upon terms of easy compromise—it would be the act of a madwoman!"

Thus pondered the veteran politician, until they reached Bittlebrains House, where it had been previously settled they

were to dine and repose themselves, and prosecute their journey in the afternoon.

They were received with an excess of hospitality; and the most marked attention was offered to the Master of Ravenswood, in particular, by their noble entertainers. The truth was, that Lord Bittlebrains had obtained his peerage by a good deal of plausibility, an art of building up a character for wisdom upon a very trite style of commonplace eloquence, a steady observation of the changes of the times, and the power of rendering certain political services to those who could best reward them. His lady and he, not feeling quite easy under their new honors, to which use had not adapted their feelings, were very desirous to procure the fraternal countenance of those who were born denizens of the regions into which they had been exalted from a lower sphere. The extreme attention which they paid to the Master of Ravenswood had its usual effect in exalting his importance in the eyes of the Lord Keeper, who, although he had a reasonable degree of contempt for Lord Bittlebrains's general parts, entertained a high opinion of the acuteness of his judgment in all matters of self-interest.

"I wish Lady Ashton had seen this," was his internal reflection; "no man knows so well as Bittlebrains on which side his bread is buttered; and he fawns on the Master like a beggar's messan on a cook. And my lady, too, bringing forward her beetle-browed misses to skirl and play upon the virginals, as if she said, 'Pick and choose.' They are no more comparable to Lucy than an owl is to a cygnet, and so they may carry their black brows to a farther market."

The entertainment being ended, our travellers, who had still to measure the longest part of their journey, resumed their horses; and after the Lord Keeper, the Master, and the domestics had drunk *doch-an-dorroch*, or the stirrup-cup, in the liquors adapted to their various ranks, the cavalcade resumed its progress.

It was dark by the time they entered the avenue of Ravenswood Castle, a long straight line leading directly to the front of the house, flanked with huge elm-trees, which sighed to the night-wind, as if they compassionated the heir of their ancient proprietors, who now returned to their shades in the society, and almost in the retinue, of their new master. Some feelings of the same kind oppressed the mind of the Master himself. He gradually became silent, and dropped a little behind the lady, at whose bridle-rein he had hitherto waited with such devotion. He well recollected the period when,

at the same hour in the evening, he had accompanied his father, as that nobleman left, never again to return to it, the mansion from which he derived his name and title. The extensive front of the old castle, on which he remembered having often looked back, was then "as black as mourning weed." The same front now glanced with many lights, some throwing far forward into the night a fixed and stationary blaze, and others hurrying from one window to another, intimating the bustle and busy preparation preceding their arrival, which had been intimated by an avant-courier. The contrast pressed so strongly upon the Master's heart as to awaken some of the sterner feelings with which he had been accustomed to regard the new lord of his paternal domain, and to impress his countenance with an air of severe gravity, when, alighted from his horse, he stood in the hall no longer his own, surrounded by the numerous menials of its present owner.

The Lord Keeper, when about to welcome him with the cordiality which their late intercourse seemed to render proper, became aware of the change, refrained from his purpose, and only intimated the ceremony of reception by a deep reverence to his guest, seeming thus delicately to share the feelings which predominated on his brow.

Two upper domestics, bearing each a huge pair of silver candlesticks, now marshalled the company into a large saloon, or withdrawing-room, where new alterations impressed upon Ravenswood the superior wealth of the present inhabitants of the castle. The mouldering tapestry, which, in his father's time, had half covered the walls of this stately apartment, and half streamed from them in tatters, had given place to a complete finishing of wainscot, the cornice of which, as well as the frames of the various compartments, were ornamented with festoons of flowers and with birds, which, though carved in oak, seemed, such was the art of the chisel, actually to swell their throats and flutter their wings. Several old family portraits of armed heroes of the house of Ravenswood, together with a suit or two of old armor and some military weapons, had given place to those of King William and Queen Mary, of Sir Thomas Hope and Lord Stair, two distinguished Scottish lawyers. The pictures of the Lord Keeper's father and mother were also to be seen; the latter, sour, shrewish, and solemn, in her black hood and close pinners, with a book of devotion in her hand; the former, exhibiting beneath a black silk Geneva cowl, or skull-cap, which sat as close to the head as if it had been shaven, a pinched, peevish, Puritanical set of features, terminating in a hungry, reddish, peaked beard,

forming on the whole a countenance in the expression of which the hypocrite seemed to contend with the miser and the knave. "And it is to make room for such scarecrows as these," thought Ravenswood, "that my ancestors have been torn down from the walls which they erected!" He looked at them again, and, as he looked, the recollection of Lucy Ashton, for she had not entered the apartment with them, seemed less lively in his imagination. There were also two or three Dutch drolleries, as the pictures of Ostade and Teniers were then termed, with one good painting of the Italian school. There was, besides, a noble full-length of the Lord Keeper in his robes of office, placed beside his lady in silk and ermine, a haughty beauty, bearing in her looks all the pride of the house of Douglas, from which she was descended. The painter, notwithstanding his skill, overcome by the reality, or, perhaps, from a suppressed sense of humor, had not been able to give the husband on the canvas that air of awful rule and right supremacy which indicates the full possession of domestic authority. It was obvious at the first glance, that, despite mace and gold frogs, the Lord Keeper was somewhat henpecked. The floor of this fine saloon was laid with rich carpets, huge fires blazed in the double chimneys, and ten silver sconces, reflecting with their bright plates the lights which they supported, made the whole seem as brilliant as day.

"Would you choose any refreshment, Master?" said Sir William Ashton, not unwilling to break the awkward silence.

He received no answer, the Master being so busily engaged in marking the various changes which had taken place in the apartment, that he hardly heard the Lord Keeper address him. A repetition of the offer of refreshment, with the addition, that the family meal would be presently ready, compelled his attention, and reminded him that he acted a weak, perhaps even a ridiculous, part in suffering himself to be overcome by the circumstances in which he found himself. He compelled himself, therefore, to enter into conversation with Sir William Ashton, with as much appearance of indifference as he could well command.

"You will not be surprised, Sir William, that I am interested in the changes you have made for the better in this apartment. In my father's time, after our misfortunes compelled him to live in retirement, it was little used, except by me as a play-room, when the weather would not permit me to go abroad. In that recess was my little workshop, where I treasured the few carpenters' tools which old Caleb procured

for me, and taught me how to use; there, in yonder corner, under that handsome silver sconce, I kept my fishing-rods and hunting poles, bows and arrows."

"I have a young birkie," said the Lord Keeper, willing to change the tone of the conversation, "of much the same turn. He is never happy save when he is in the field. I wonder he is not here. Here, Lockhard; send William Shaw for Mr. Henry. I suppose he is, as usual, tied to Lucy's apron-string; that foolish girl, Master, draws the whole family after her at her pleasure."

Even this allusion to his daughter, though artfully thrown out, did not recall Ravenswood from his own topic.

"We were obliged to leave," he said, "some armor and portraits in this apartment; may I ask where they have been removed to?"

"Why," answered the Keeper, with some hesitation, "the room was fitted up in our absence, and *cedant arma togæ* is the maxim of lawyers, you know: I am afraid it has been here somewhat too literally complied with. I hope—I believe they are safe, I am sure I gave orders; may I hope that when they are recovered, and put in proper order, you will do me the honor to accept them at my hand, as an atonement for their accidental derangement?"

The Master of Ravenswood bowed stiffly, and, with folded arms, again resumed his survey of the room.

Henry, a spoiled boy of fifteen, burst into the room, and ran up to his father. "Think of Lucy, papa; she has come home so cross and so fractious, that she will not go down to the stable to see my new pony, that Bob Wilson brought from the Mull of Galloway."

"I think you were very unreasonable to ask her," said the Keeper.

"Then you are as cross as she is," answered the boy; "but when mamma comes home, she'll claw up both your mittens."

"Hush your impertinence, you little forward imp!" said his father; "where is your tutor?"

"Gone to a wedding at Dunbar; I hope he'll get a haggis to his dinner;" and he began to sing the old Scottish song—

"'There was a haggis in Dunbar,
Fal de ral, etc.
Mony better and few waur,
Fal de ral, etc.'"

"I am much obliged to Mr. Cordery for his attentions," said the Lord Keeper; "and pray who has had the charge of you while I was away, Mr. Henry?"

"Norman and Bob Wilson, forbye my own self."

"A groom and a gamekeeper, and your own silly self—proper guardians for a young advocate! Why, you will never know any statutes but those against shooting red-deer, killing salmon, and——"

"And speaking of red-game," said the young scapegrace, interrupting his father without scruple or hesitation, "Norman has shot a buck, and I showed the branches to Lucy, and she says they have but eight tines; and she says that you killed a deer with Lord Bittlebrains's hounds, when you were west away, and, do you know, she says it had ten tines; is it true?"

"It may have had twenty, Henry, for what I know; but if you go to that gentleman, he can tell you all about it. Go speak to him, Henry; it is the Master of Ravenswood."

While they conversed thus, the father and son were standing by the fire; and the Master, having walked towards the upper end of the apartment, stood with his back towards them, apparently engaged in examining one of the paintings. The boy ran up to him, and pulled him by the skirt of the coat with the freedom of a spoiled child, saying, "I say, sir, if you please to tell me——" but when the Master turned round, and Henry saw his face, he became suddenly and totally disconcerted; walked two or three steps backward, and still gazed on Ravenswood with an air of fear and wonder, which had totally banished from his features their usual expression of pert vivacity.

"Come to me, young gentleman," said the Master, "and I will tell you all I know about the hunt."

"Go to the gentleman, Henry," said his father; "you are not used to be so shy."

But neither invitation nor exhortation had any effect on the boy. On the contrary, he turned round as soon as he had completed his survey of the Master, and walking as cautiously as if he had been treading upon eggs, he glided back to his father, and pressed as close to him as possible. Ravenswood, to avoid hearing the dispute betwixt the father and the over-indulged boy, thought it most polite to turn his face once more towards the pictures, and pay no attention to what they said.

"Why do you not speak to the Master, you little fool?" said the Lord Keeper.

"I am afraid," said Henry, in a very low tone of voice.

"Afraid, you goose!" said his father, giving him a slight shake by the collar. "What makes you afraid?"

"What makes him so like the picture of Sir Malise Ravenswood, then?" said the boy, whispering.

"What picture, you natural?" said his father. "I used to think you only a scapegrace, but I believe you will turn out a born idiot."

"I tell you, it is the picture of old Malise of Ravenswood, and he is as like it as if he had loupen out of the canvas; and it is up in the old baron's hall that the maids launder the clothes in; and it has armor, and not a coat like the gentleman; and he has not a beard and whiskers like the picture; and it has another kind of thing about the throat, and no band-strings as he has; and——"

"And why should not the gentleman be like his ancestor, you silly boy?" said the Lord Keeper.

"Ay; but if he is come to chase us all out of the castle," said the boy, "and has twenty men at his back in disguise; and is come to say, with a hollow voice, 'I bide my time;' and is to kill you on the hearth as Malise did the other man, and whose blood is still to be seen!"

"Hush! nonsense!" said the Lord Keeper, not himself much pleased to hear these disagreeable coincidences forced on his notice. "Master, here comes Lockhard to say supper is served."

And, at the same instant, Lucy entered at another door, having changed her dress since her return. The exquisite feminine beauty of her countenance, now shaded only by a profusion of sunny tresses; the sylph-like form, disencumbered of her heavy riding-skirt and mantled in azure silk; the grace of her manner and of her smile, cleared, with a celerity which surprised the Master himself, all the gloomy and unfavorable thoughts which had for some time overclouded his fancy. In those features, so simply sweet, he could trace no alliance with the pinched visage of the peak-bearded, black-capped Puritan, or his starched, withered spouse, with the craft expressed in the Lord Keeper's countenance, or the haughtiness which predominated in that of his lady; and, while he gazed on Lucy Ashton, she seemed to be an angel descended on earth, unallied to the coarser mortals among whom she deigned to dwell for a season. Such is the power of beauty over a youthful and enthusiastic fancy.

CHAPTER XIX

I do too ill in this,
And must not think but that a parent's plaint
Will move the heavens to pour forth misery
Upon the head of disobediency.
Yet reason tells us, parents are o'erseen,
When with too strict a rein they do hold in
Their child's affection, and control that love,
Which the high powers divine inspire them with.
The Hog hath lost his Pearl.

THE feast of Ravenswood Castle was as remarkable for its profusion as that of Wolf's Crag had been for its ill-veiled penury. The Lord Keeper might feel internal pride at the contrast, but he had too much tact to suffer it to appear. On the contrary, he seemed to remember with pleasure what he called Mr. Balderstone's bachelor's meal, and to be rather disgusted than pleased with the display upon his own groaning board.

"We do these things," he said, "because others do them; but I was bred a plain man at my father's frugal table, and I should like well would my wife and family permit me to return to my sowens and my poor-man-of-mutton." *

This was a little overstretched. The Master only answered, "That different ranks—I mean," said he, correcting himself, "different degrees of wealth require a different style of housekeeping."

This dry remark put a stop to farther conversation on the subject, nor is it necessary to record that which was substituted in its place. The evening was spent with freedom, and even cordiality; and Henry had so far overcome his first apprehensions, that he had settled a party for coursing a stag with the representative and living resemblance of grim Sir Malise of Ravenswood, called the Revenger. The next morning was the appointed time. It rose upon active sportsmen and successful sport. The banquet came in course; and a pressing invitation to tarry yet another day was given and accepted. This Ravenswood had resolved should be the last of his stay; but he recollected he had not yet visited the

* See Note 8.

ancient and devoted servant of his house, Old Alice, and it was but kind to dedicate one morning to the gratification of so ancient an adherent.

To visit Alice, therefore, a day was devoted, and Lucy was the Master's guide upon the way. Henry, it is true, accompanied them, and took from their walk the air of a *tête-à-tête*, while, in reality, it was little else, considering the variety of circumstances which occurred to prevent the boy from giving the least attention to what passed between his companions. Now a rook settled on a branch within shot; anon a hare crossed their path, and Henry and his greyhound went astray in pursuit of it; then he had to hold a long conversation with the forester, which detained him a while behind his companions; and again he went to examine the earth of a badger, which carried him on a good way before them.

The conversation betwixt the Master and his sister, meanwhile, took an interesting, and almost a confidential, turn. She could not help mentioning her sense of the pain he must feel in visiting scenes so well known to him, bearing now an aspect so different; and so gently was her sympathy expressed, that Ravenswood felt it for a moment as a full requital of all his misfortunes. Some such sentiment escaped him, which Lucy heard with more of confusion than displeasure; and she may be forgiven the imprudence of listening to such language, considering that the situation in which she was placed by her father seemed to authorize Ravenswood to use it. Yet she made an effort to turn the conversation, and she succeeded; for the Master also had advanced farther than he intended, and his conscience had instantly checked him when he found himself on the verge of speaking of love to the daughter of Sir William Ashton.

They now approached the hut of Old Alice, which had of late been rendered more comfortable, and presented an appearance less picturesque, perhaps, but far neater than before. The old woman was on her accustomed seat beneath the weeping birch, basking, with the listless enjoyment of age and infirmity, in the beams of the autumn sun. At the arrival of her visitors she turned her head towards them. "I hear your step, Miss Ashton," she said, "but the gentleman who attends you is not my lord, your father."

"And why should you think so, Alice?" said Lucy; "or how is it possible for you to judge so accurately by the sound of a step, on this firm earth, and in the open air?"

"My hearing, my child, has been sharpened by my blind-

ness, and I can now draw conclusions from the slightest sounds, which formerly reached my ears as unheeded as they now approach yours. Necessity is a stern but an excellent school-mistress, and she that has lost her sight must collect her information from other sources."

"Well, you hear a man's step, I grant it," said Lucy; "but why, Alice, may it not be my father's?"

"The pace of age, my love, is timid and cautious: the foot takes leave of the earth slowly, and is planted down upon it with hesitation; it is the hasty and determined step of youth that I now hear, and—could I give credit to so strange a thought—I should say it was the step of a Ravenswood."

"This is indeed," said Ravenswood, "an acuteness of organ which I could not have credited had I not witnessed it. I am indeed the Master of Ravenswood, Alice—the son of your old master."

"You!" said the old woman, with almost a scream of surprise—"you the Master of Ravenswood—here—in this place, and thus accompanied! I cannot believe it. Let me pass my old hand over your face, that my touch may bear witness to my ears."

The Master sat down beside her on the earthen bank, and permitted her to touch his features with her trembling hand.

"It is indeed!" she said—"it is the features as well as the voice of Ravenswood—the high lines of pride, as well as the bold and haughty tone. But what do you here, Master of Ravenswood?—what do you in your enemy's domain, and in company with his child?"

As Old Alice spoke, her face kindled, as probably that of an ancient feudal vassal might have done in whose presence his youthful liege-lord had showed some symptom of degenerating from the spirit of his ancestors.

"The Master of Ravenswood," said Lucy, who liked not the tone of this expostulation, and was desirous to abridge it, "is upon a visit to my father."

"Indeed!" said the old blind woman, in an accent of surprise.

"I knew," continued Lucy, "I should do him a pleasure by conducting him to your cottage."

"Where, to say the truth, Alice," said Ravenswood, "I expected a more cordial reception."

"It is most wonderful!" said the old woman, muttering to herself; "but the ways of Heaven are not like our ways, and its judgments are brought about by means far beyond our fathoming. Hearken, young man," she said; "your

fathers were implacable, but they were honorable, foes; they sought not to ruin their enemies under the mask of hospitality. What have you to do with Lucy Ashton? why should your steps move in the same footpath with hers? why should your voice sound in the same chord and time with those of Sir William Ashton's daughter? Young man, he who aims at revenge by dishonorable means——"

"Be silent, woman!" said Ravenswood, sternly; "is it the devil that prompts your voice? Know that this young lady has not on earth a friend who would venture farther to save her from injury or from insult."

"And is it even so?" said the old woman, in an altered but melancholy tone, "then God help you both!"

"Amen! Alice," said Lucy, who had not comprehended the import of what the blind woman had hinted, "and send you your senses, Alice, and your good-humor. If you hold this mysterious language, instead of welcoming your friends, they will think of you as other people do."

"And how do other people think?" said Ravenswood, for he also began to believe the old woman spoke with incoherence.

"They think," said Henry Ashton, who came up at that moment, and whispered into Ravenswood's ear, "that she is a witch, that should have been burned with them that suffered at Haddington."

"What is that you say?" said Alice, turning towards the boy, her sightless visage inflamed with passion; "that I am a witch, and ought to have suffered with the helpless old wretches who were murdered at Haddington?"

"Hear to that now," again whispered Henry, "and me whispering lower than a wren cheeps!"

"If the usurer, and the oppressor, and the grinder of the poor man's face, and the remover of ancient landmarks, and the subverter of ancient houses, were at the same stake with me, I could say, 'Light the fire, in God's name!'"

"This is dreadful," said Lucy; "I have never seen the poor deserted woman in this state of mind; but age and poverty can ill bear reproach. Come, Henry, we will leave her for the present; she wishes to speak with the Master alone. We will walk homeward, and rest us," she added, looking at Ravenswood, "by the Mermaiden's Well."

"And Alice," said the boy, "if you know of any hare that comes through among the deer, and makes them drop their calves out of season, you may tell her, with my compliments to command, that if Norman has not got a silver bullet

ready for her, I'll lend him one of my doublet-buttons on purpose."

Alice made no answer till she was aware that the sister and brother were out of hearing. She then said to Ravenswood, "And you, too, are angry with me for my love? It is just that strangers should be offended, but you, too, are angry!"

"I am not angry, Alice," said the Master, "only surprised that you, whose good sense I have heard so often praised, should give way to offensive and unfounded suspicions."

"Offensive!" said Alice. "Ay, truth is ever offensive; but, surely, not unfounded."

"I tell you, dame, most groundless," replied Ravenswood.

"Then the world has changed its wont, and the Ravenswoods their hereditary temper, and the eyes of Old Alice's understanding are yet more blind than those of her countenance. When did a Ravenswood seek the house of his enemy but with the purpose of revenge? and hither are you come, Edgar Ravenswood, either in fatal anger or in still more fatal love."

"In neither," said Ravenswood, "I give you mine honor—I mean, I assure you."

Alice could not see his blushing cheek, but she noticed his hesitation, and that he retracted the pledge which he seemed at first disposed to attach to his denial.

"It is so, then," she said, "and therefore she is to tarry by the Mermaiden's Well! Often has it been called a place fatal to the race of Ravenswood—often has it proved so; but never was it likely to verify old sayings as much as on this day."

"You drive me to madness, Alice," said Ravenswood; "you are more silly and more superstitious than old Balderstone. Are you such a wretched Christian as to suppose I would in the present day levy war against the Ashton family, as was the sanguinary custom in elder times? or do you suppose me so foolish, that I cannot walk by a young lady's side without plunging headlong in love with her?"

"My thoughts," replied Alice, "are my own; and if my mortal sight is closed to objects present with me, it may be I can look with more steadfastness into future events. Are you prepared to sit lowest at the board which was once your father's own, unwillingly, as a connection and ally of his proud successor? Are you ready to live on his bounty; to follow him in the by-paths of intrigue and chicane, which none can better point out to you; to gnaw the bones of his prey when he has devoured the substance? Can you say as

Sir William Ashton says, think as he thinks, vote as he votes, and call your father's murderer your worshipful father-in-law and reverend patron? Master of Ravenswood, I am the eldest servant of your house, and I would rather see you shrouded and coffined!"

The tumult in Ravenswood's mind was uncommonly great; she struck upon and awakened a chord which he had for some time successfully silenced. He strode backwards and forwards through the little garden with a hasty pace; and at length checking himself, and stopping right opposite to Alice, he exclaimed, "Woman! on the verge of the grave, dare you urge the son of your master to blood and to revenge?"

"God forbid!" said Alice, solemnly; "and therefore I would have you depart these fatal bounds, where your love, as well as your hatred, threatens sure mischief, or at least disgrace, both to yourself and others. I would shield, were it in the power of this withered hand, the Ashtons from you, and you from them, and both from their own passions. You can have nothing—ought to have nothing, in common with them. Begone from among them; and if God has destined vengeance on the oppressor's house, do not you be the instrument."

"I will think on what you have said, Alice," said Ravenswood, more composedly. "I believe you mean truly and faithfully by me, but you urge the freedom of an ancient domestic somewhat too far. But farewell; and if Heaven afford me better means, I will not fail to contribute to your comfort."

He attempted to put a piece of gold into her hand, which she refused to receive; and, in the slight struggle attending his wish to force it upon her, it dropped to the earth.

"Let it remain an instant on the ground," said Alice, as the Master stooped to raise it; "and believe me, that piece of gold is an emblem of her whom you love; she is as precious, I grant, but you must stoop even to abasement before you can win her. For me, I have as little to do with gold as with earthly passions; and the best news that the world has in store for me is, that Edgar Ravenswood is a hundred miles distant from the seat of his ancestors, with the determination never again to behold it."

"Alice," said the Master, who began to think this earnestness had some more secret cause than arose from anything that the blind woman could have gathered from this casual visit, "I have heard you praised by my mother for your

sense, acuteness, and fidelity; you are no fool to start at shadows, or to dread old superstitious saws, like Caleb Balderstone; tell me distinctly where my danger lies, if you are aware of any which is tending towards me. If I know myself, I am free from all such views respecting Miss Ashton as you impute to me. I have necessary business to settle with Sir William; that arranged, I shall depart, and with as little wish, as you may easily believe, to return to a place full of melancholy subjects of reflection, as you have to see me here."

Alice bent her sightless eyes on the ground, and was for some time plunged in deep meditation. "I will speak the truth," she said at length, raising up her head—"I will tell you the source of my apprehensions, whether my candor be for good or for evil. Lucy Ashton loves you, Lord of Ravenswood!"

"It is impossible," said the Master.

"A thousand circumstances have proved it to me," replied the blind woman. "Her thoughts have turned on no one else since you saved her from death, and that my experienced judgment has won from her own conversation. Having told you this—if you are indeed a gentleman and your father's son—you will make it a motive for flying from her presence. Her passion will die like a lamp for want of that the flame should feed upon; but, if you remain here, her destruction, or yours, or that of both, will be the inevitable consequence of her misplaced attachment. I tell you this secret unwillingly, but it could not have been hid long from your own observation, and it is better you learn it from mine. Depart, Master of Ravenswood; you have my secret. If you remain an hour under Sir William Ashton's roof without the resolution to marry his daughter, you are a villain; if with the purpose of allying yourself with him, you are an infatuated and predestined fool."

So saying, the old blind woman arose, assumed her staff, and, tottering to her hut, entered it and closed the door, leaving Ravenswood to his own reflections.

CHAPTER XX

> Lovelier in her own retired abode
> . . . than Naiad by the side
> Of Grecian brook—or Lady of the Mere
> Lone sitting by the shores of old romance.
>
> WORDSWORTH.

THE meditations of Ravenswood were of a very mixed complexion. He saw himself at once in the very dilemma which he had for some time felt apprehensive he might be placed in. The pleasure he felt in Lucy's company had indeed approached to fascination, yet it had never altogether surmounted his internal reluctance to wed with the daughter of his father's foe; and even in forgiving Sir William Ashton the injuries which his family had received, and giving him credit for the kind intentions he professed to entertain, he could not bring himself to contemplate as possible an alliance betwixt their houses. Still, he felt that Alice spoke truth, and that his honor now required he should take an instant leave of Ravenswood Castle, or become a suitor of Lucy Ashton. The possibility of being rejected, too, should he make advances to her wealthy and powerful father—to sue for the hand of an Ashton and be refused—this were a consummation too disgraceful. "I wish her well," he said to himself, "and for her sake I forgive the injuries her father has done to my house; but I will never—no, never see her more!"

With one bitter pang he adopted this resolution, just as he came to where two paths parted: the one to the Mermaiden's Fountain, where he knew Lucy waited him, the other leading to the castle by another and more circuitous road. He paused an instant when about to take the latter path, thinking what apology he should make for conduct which must needs seem extraordinary, and had just muttered to himself, "Sudden news from Edinburgh—any pretext will serve; only let me dally no longer here," when young Henry came flying up to him, half out of breath—"Master, Master, you must give Lucy your arm back to the castle, for I cannot give her mine; for Norman is waiting for me, and I am to go with him to make his ring-walk, and I would not stay away for a gold

Jacobus; and Lucy is afraid to walk home alone, though all the wild nowt have been shot, and so you must come away directly."

Betwixt two scales equally loaded, a feather's weight will turn the scale. "It is impossible for me to leave the young lady in the wood alone," said Ravenswood; "to see her once more can be of little consequence, after the frequent meetings we have had. I ought, too, in courtesy, to apprise her of my intention to quit the castle."

And having thus satisfied himself that he was taking not only a wise, but an absolutely necessary, step, he took the path to the fatal fountain. Henry no sooner saw him on the way to join his sister than he was off like lightning in another direction, to enjoy the society of the forester in their congenial pursuits. Ravenswood, not allowing himself to give a second thought to the propriety of his own conduct, walked with a quick step towards the stream, where he found Lucy seated alone by the ruin.

She sat upon one of the disjointed stones of the ancient fountain, and seemed to watch the progress of its current, as it bubbled forth to daylight, in gay and sparkling profusion, from under the shadow of the ribbed and darksome vault, with which veneration, or perhaps remorse, had canopied its source. To a superstitious eye, Lucy Ashton, folded in her plaided mantle, with her long hair, escaping partly from the snood and falling upon her silver neck, might have suggested the idea of the murdered Nymph of the Fountain. But Ravenswood only saw a female exquisitely beautiful, and rendered yet more so in his eyes—how could it be otherwise?—by the consciousness that she had placed her affections on him. As he gazed on her, he felt his fixed resolution melting like wax in the sun, and hastened, therefore, from his concealment in the neighboring thicket. She saluted him, but did not arise from the stone on which she was seated.

"My madcap brother," she said, "has left me, but I expect him back in a few minutes; for, fortunately, as anything pleases him for a minute, nothing has charms for him much longer."

Ravenswood did not feel the power of informing Lucy that her brother meditated a distant excursion, and would not return in haste. He sat himself down on the grass, at some little distance from Miss Ashton, and both were silent for a short space.

"I like this spot," said Lucy at length, as if she had found the silence embarrassing; "the bubbling murmur of the

clear fountain, the waving of the trees, the profusion of grass and wild-flowers that rise among the ruins, make it like a scene in romance. I think, too, I have heard it is a spot connected with the legendary lore which I love so well."

"It has been thought," answered Ravenswood, "a fatal spot to my family; and I have some reason to term it so, for it was here I first saw Miss Ashton; and it is here I must take my leave of her forever."

The blood, which the first part of this speech called into Lucy's cheeks, was speedily expelled by its conclusion.

"To take leave of us, Master!" she exclaimed; "what can have happened to hurry you away? I know Alice hates —I mean dislikes my father; and I hardly understood her humor to-day, it was so mysterious. But I am certain my father is sincerely grateful for the high service you rendered us. Let me hope that, having won your friendship hardly, we shall not lose it lightly."

"Lose it, Miss Ashton!" said the Master of Ravenswood. "No; wherever my fortune calls me—whatever she inflicts upon me—it is your friend—your sincere friend, who acts or suffers. But there is a fate on me, and I must go, or I shall add the ruin of others to my own."

"Yet do not go from us, Master," said Lucy; and she laid her hand, in all simplicity and kindness, upon the skirt of his cloak, as if to detain him. "You shall not part from us. My father is powerful, he has friends that are more so than himself; do not go till you see what his gratitude will do for you. Believe me, he is already laboring in your behalf with the council."

"It may be so," said the Master, proudly; "yet it is not to your father, Miss Ashton, but to my own exertions, that I ought to owe success in the career on which I am about to enter. My preparations are already made—a sword and a cloak, and a bold heart and a determined hand."

Lucy covered her face with her hands, and the tears, in spite of her, forced their way between her fingers.

"Forgive me," said Ravenswood, taking her right hand, which, after slight resistance, she yielded to him, still continuing to shade her face with the left—"I am too rude—too rough—too intractable to deal with any being so soft and gentle as you are. Forget that so stern a vision has crossed your path of life; and let me pursue mine, sure that I can meet with no worse misfortune after the moment it divides me from your side."

Lucy wept on, but her tears were less bitter. Each

attempt which the Master made to explain his purpose of departure only proved a new evidence of his desire to stay; until, at length, instead of bidding her farewell, he gave his faith to her forever, and received her troth in return. The whole passed so suddenly, and arose so much out of the immediate impulse of the moment, that ere the Master of Ravenswood could reflect upon the consequences of the step which he had taken, their lips, as well as their hands, had pledged the sincerity of their affection.

"And now," he said, after a moment's consideration, "it is fit I should speak to Sir William Ashton; he must know of our engagement. Ravenswood must not seem to dwell under his roof to solicit clandestinely the affections of his daughter."

"You would not speak to my father on the subject?" said Lucy, doubtingly; and then added more warmly, "O do not—do not! Let your lot in life be determined—your station and purpose ascertained, before you address my father. I am sure he loves you—I think he will consent; but then my mother——!"

She paused, ashamed to express the doubt she felt how far her father dared to form any positive resolution on this most important subject without the consent of his lady.

"Your mother, my Lucy!" replied Ravenswood. "She is of the house of Douglas, a house that has intermarried with mine even when its glory and power were at the highest; what could your mother object to my alliance?"

"I did not say object," said Lucy; "but she is jealous of her rights, and may claim a mother's title to be consulted in the first instance."

"Be it so," replied Ravenswood. "London is distant, but a letter will reach it and receive an answer within a fortnight; I will not press on the Lord Keeper for an instant reply to my proposal."

"But," hesitated Lucy, "were it not better to wait—to wait a few weeks? Were my mother to see you—to know you, I am sure she would approve; but you are unacquainted personally, and the ancient feud between the families——"

Ravenswood fixed upon her his keen dark eyes, as if he was desirous of penetrating into her very soul.

"Lucy," he said, "I have sacrificed to you projects of vengeance long nursed, and sworn to with ceremonies little better than heathen—I sacrificed them to your image, ere I knew the worth which it represented. In the evening which succeeded my poor father's funeral, I cut a lock from my hair,

and, as it consumed in the fire, swore that my rage and revenge should pursue his enemies, until they shrivelled before me like that scorched-up symbol of annihilation."

"It was a deadly sin," said Lucy, turning pale, "to make a vow so fatal."

"I acknowledge it," said Ravenswood, "and it had been a worse crime to keep it. It was for your sake that I abjured these purposes of vengeance, though I scarce knew that such was the argument by which I was conquered, until I saw you once more, and became conscious of the influence you possessed over me."

"And why do you now," said Lucy, "recall sentiments so terrible—sentiments so inconsistent with those you profess for me—with those your importunity has prevailed on me to acknowledge?"

"Because," said her lover, "I would impress on you the price at which I have bought your love—the right I have to expect your constancy. I say not that I have bartered for it the honor of my house, its last remaining possession; but though I say it not, and think it not, I cannot conceal from myself that the world may do both."

"If such are your sentiments," said Lucy, "you have played a cruel game with me. But it is not too late to give it over: take back the faith and troth which you could not plight to me without suffering abatement of honor—let what is passed be as if it had not been—forget me; I will endeavor to forget myself."

"You do me injustice," said the Master of Ravenswood—"by all I hold true and honorable, you do me the extremity of injustice; if I mentioned the price at which I have bought your love, it is only to show how much I prize it, to bind our engagement by a still firmer tie, and to show, by what I have done to attain this station in your regard, how much I must suffer should you ever break your faith."

"And why, Ravenswood," answered Lucy, "should you think that possible? Why should you urge me with even the mention of infidelity? Is it because I ask you to delay applying to my father for a little space of time? Bind me by what vows you please; if vows are unnecessary to secure constancy, they may yet prevent suspicion."

Ravenswood pleaded, apologized, and even kneeled, to appease her displeasure; and Lucy, as placable as she was single-hearted, readily forgave the offence which his doubts had implied. The dispute thus agitated, however, ended by the lovers going through an emblematic ceremony of their

troth-plight, of which the vulgar still preserve some traces. They broke betwixt them the thin broad-piece of gold which Alice had refused to receive from Ravenswood.

"And never shall this leave my bosom," said Lucy, as she hung the piece of gold round her neck, and concealed it with her handkerchief, "until you, Edgar Ravenswood, ask me to resign it to you; and, while I wear it, never shall that heart acknowledge another love than yours."

With like protestations, Ravenswood placed his portion of the coin opposite to his heart. And now, at length, it struck them that time had hurried fast on during this interview, and their absence at the castle would be subject of remark, if not of alarm. As they arose to leave the fountain which had been witness of their mutual engagement, an arrow whistled through the air, and struck a raven perched on the sere branch of an old oak, near to where they had been seated. The bird fluttered a few yards and dropped at the feet of Lucy, whose dress was stained with some spots of its blood.

Miss Ashton was much alarmed, and Ravenswood, surprised and angry, looked everywhere for the marksman, who had given them a proof of his skill as little expected as desired. He was not long of discovering himself, being no other than Henry Ashton, who came running up with a crossbow in his hand.

"I knew I should startle you," he said; "and do you know, you looked so busy that I hoped it would have fallen souse on your heads before you were aware of it. What was the Master saying to you, Lucy?"

"I was telling your sister what an idle lad you were, keeping us waiting here for you so long," said Ravenswood, to save Lucy's confusion.

"Waiting for me! Why, I told you to see Lucy home, and that I was to go to make the ring-walk with old Norman in the Hayberry thicket, and you may be sure that would take a good hour, and we have all the deer's marks and furnishes got, while you were sitting here with Lucy, like a lazy loon."

"Well, well, Mr. Henry," said Ravenswood; "but let us see how you will answer to me for killing the raven. Do you know, the ravens are all under the protection of the Lords of Ravenswood, and to kill one in their presence is such bad luck that it deserves the stab?"

"And that's what Norman said," replied the boy; "he came as far with me as within a flight-shot of you, and he said he never saw a raven sit still so near living folk, and

he wished it might be for good luck, for the raven is one of the wildest birds that flies, unless it be a tame one; and so I crept on and on, till I was within threescore yards of him, and then whiz went the bolt, and there he lies, faith! Was it not well shot? and, I dare say, I have not shot in a cross-bow—not ten times, maybe."

"Admirably shot, indeed," said Ravenswood; "and you will be a fine marksman if you practise hard."

"And that's what Norman says," answered the boy; "but I am sure it is not my fault if I do not practise enough; for, of free will, I would do little else, only my father and tutor are angry sometimes, and only Miss Lucy there gives herself airs about my being busy, for all she can sit idle by a well-side the whole day, when she has a handsome young gentleman to prate with. I have known her do so twenty times, if you will believe me."

The boy looked at his sister as he spoke, and, in the midst of his mischievous chatter, had the sense to see that he was really inflicting pain upon her, though without being able to comprehend the cause or the amount.

"Come now, Lucy," he said, "don't greet; and if I have said anything beside the mark, I'll deny it again; and what does the Master of Ravenswood care if you had a hundred sweethearts? so ne'er put finger in your eye about it."

The Master of Ravenswood was, for the moment, scarce satisfied with what he heard; yet his good sense naturally regarded it as the chatter of a spoiled boy, who strove to mortify his sister in the point which seemed most accessible for the time. But, although of a temper equally slow in receiving impressions and obstinate in retaining them, the prattle of Henry served to nourish in his mind some vague suspicion that his present engagement might only end in his being exposed, like a conquered enemy in a Roman triumph, a captive attendant on the car of a victor who meditated only the satiating his pride at the expense of the vanquished. There was, we repeat it, no real ground whatever for such an apprehension, nor could he be said seriously to entertain such for a moment. Indeed, it was impossible to look at the clear blue eye of Lucy Ashton, and entertain the slightest permanent doubt concerning the sincerity of her disposition. Still however, conscious pride and conscious poverty combined to render a mind suspicious which, in more fortunate circumstances, would have been a stranger to that as well as to every other meanness.

They reached the castle, where Sir William Ashton, who

had been alarmed by the length of their stay, met them in the hall.

"Had Lucy," he said, "been in any other company than that of one who had shown he had so complete power of protecting her, he confessed he should have been very uneasy, and would have dispatched persons in quest of them. But, in the company of the Master of Ravenswood, he knew his daughter had nothing to dread."

Lucy commenced some apology for their long delay, but, conscience-struck, became confused as she proceeded; and when Ravenswood, coming to her assistance, endeavored to render the explanation complete and satisfactory, he only involved himself in the same disorder, like one who, endeavoring to extricate his companion from a slough, entangles himself in the same tenacious swamp. It cannot be supposed that the confusion of the two youthful lovers escaped the observation of the subtle lawyer, accustomed, by habit and profession, to trace human nature through all her windings. But it was not his present policy to take any notice of what he observed. He desired to hold the Master of Ravenswood bound, but wished that he himself should remain free; and it did not occur to him that his plan might be defeated by Lucy's returning the passion which he hoped she might inspire. If she should adopt some romantic feelings towards Ravenswood, in which circumstances, or the positive and absolute opposition of Lady Ashton, might render it unadvisable to indulge her, the Lord Keeper conceived they might be easily superseded and annulled by a journey to Edinburgh, or even to London, a new set of Brussels lace, and the soft whispers of half a dozen lovers, anxious to replace him whom it was convenient she should renounce. This was his provision for the worst view of the case. But, according to its more probable issue, any passing favor she might entertain for the Master of Ravenswood might require encouragement rather than repression.

This seemed the more likely, as he had that very morning, since their departure from the castle, received a letter, the contents of which he hastened to communicate to Ravenswood. A foot-post had arrived with a packet to the Lord Keeper from that friend whom we have already mentioned, who was laboring hard underhand to consolidate a band of patriots, at the head of whom stood Sir William's greatest terror, the active and ambitious Marquis of A——. The success of this convenient friend had been such, that he had obtained from Sir William, not indeed a directly favorable

answer, but certainly a most patient hearing. This he had reported to his principal, who had replied by the ancient French adage, "*Château qui parle, et femme qui écoute, l'un et l'autre va se rendre.*" A statesman who hears you propose a change of measures without reply was, according to the Marquis's opinion, in the situation of the fortress which parleys and the lady who listens, and he resolved to press the siege of the Lord Keeper.

The packet, therefore, contained a letter from his friend and ally, and another from himself, to the Lord Keeper, frankly offering an unceremonious visit. They were crossing the country to go to the southward; the roads were indifferent; the accommodation of the inns as execrable as possible; the Lord Keeper had been long acquainted intimately with one of his correspondents, and, though more slightly known to the Marquis, had yet enough of his lordship's acquaintance to render the visit sufficiently natural, and to shut the mouths of those who might be disposed to impute it to a political intrigue. He instantly accepted the offered visit, determined, however, that he would not pledge himself an inch farther for the furtherance of their views than *reason* (by which he meant his own self-interest) should plainly point out to him as proper.

Two circumstances particularly delighted him—the presence of Ravenswood, and the absence of his own lady. By having the former under his roof, he conceived he might be able to quash all such hazardous and hostile proceedings as he might otherwise have been engaged in, under the patronage of the Marquis; and Lucy, he foresaw, would make, for his immediate purpose of delay and procrastination, a much better mistress of his family than her mother, who would, he was sure, in some shape or other, contrive to disconcert his political schemes by her proud and implacable temper.

His anxious solicitations that the Master would stay to receive his kinsman, were, of course, readily complied with, since the *éclaircissement* which had taken place at the Mermaiden's Fountain had removed all wish for sudden departure. Lucy and Lockhard had, therefore, orders to provide all things necessary in their different departments, for receiving the expected guests with a pomp and display of luxury very uncommon in Scotland at that remote period.

CHAPTER XXI

Marall. Sir, the man of honor's come,
Newly alighted——
Overreach. In without reply,
And do as I command. . . .
Is the loud music I gave order for
Ready to receive him?

New Way to pay Old Debts.

SIR WILLIAM ASHTON, although a man of sense, legal information, and great practical knowledge of the world, had yet some points of character which corresponded better with the timidity of his disposition and the supple arts by which he had risen in the world, than to the degree of eminence which he had attained; as they tended to show an original mediocrity of understanding, however highly it had been cultivated, and a native meanness of disposition, however carefully veiled. He loved the ostentatious display of his wealth, less as a man to whom habit has made it necessary, than as one to whom it is still delightful from its novelty. The most trivial details did not escape him; and Lucy soon learned to watch the flush of scorn which crossed Ravenswood's cheek, when he heard her father gravely arguing with Lockhard, nay, even with the old housekeeper, upon circumstances which, in families of rank, are left uncared for, because it is supposed impossible they can be neglected.

"I could pardon Sir William," said Ravenswood, one evening after he had left the room, "some general anxiety upon this occasion, for the Marquis's visit is an honor, and should be received as such; but I am worn out by these miserable minutiæ of the buttery, and the larder, and the very hen-coop—they drive me beyond my patience; I would rather endure the poverty of Wolf's Crag than be pestered with the wealth of Ravenswood Castle."

"And yet," said Lucy, "it was by attention to these minutiæ that my father acquired the property——"

"Which my ancestors sold for lack of it," replied Ravenswood. "Be it so; a porter still bears but a burden, though the burden be of gold."

Lucy sighed ; she perceived too plainly that her lover held in scorn the manners and habits of a father to whom she had long looked up as her best and most partial friend, whose fondness had often consoled her for her mother's contemptuous harshness.

The lovers soon discovered that they differed upon other and no less important topics. Religion, the mother of peace, was, in those days of discord, so much misconstrued and mistaken, that her rules and forms were the subject of the most opposite opinions and the most hostile animosities. The Lord Keeper, being a Whig, was, of course, a Presbyterian, and had found it convenient, at different periods, to express greater zeal for the kirk than perhaps he really felt. His family, equally of course, were trained under the same institution. Ravenswood, as we know, was a High Churchman, or Episcopalian, and frequently objected to Lucy the fanaticism of some of her own communion, while she intimated, rather than expressed, horror at the latitudinarian principles which she had been taught to think connected with the prelatical form of church government.

Thus, although their mutual affection seemed to increase rather than to be diminished as their characters opened more fully on each other, the feelings of each were mingled with some less agreeable ingredients. Lucy felt a secret awe, amid all her affection for Ravenswood. His soul was of a higher, prouder character than those with whom she had hitherto mixed in intercourse ; his ideas were more fierce and free ; and he contemned many of the opinions which had been inculcated upon her as chiefly demanding her veneration. On the other hand, Ravenswood saw in Lucy a soft and flexible character, which, in his eyes at least, seemed too susceptible of being moulded to any form by those with whom she lived. He felt that his own temper required a partner of a more independent spirit, who could set sail with him on his course of life, resolved as himself to dare indifferently the storm and the favoring breeze. But Lucy was so beautiful, so devoutly attached to him, of a temper so exquisitely soft and kind, that, while he could have wished it were possible to inspire her with a greater degree of firmness and resolution, and while he sometimes became impatient of the extreme fear which she expressed of their attachment being prematurely discovered, he felt that the softness of a mind, amounting almost to feebleness, rendered her even dearer to him, as a being who had voluntarily clung to him for protection, and made him the arbiter of her fate for weal or woe. His feel-

ings towards her at such moments were those which have been since so beautifully expressed by our immortal Joanna Baillie:

> Thou sweetest thing,
> That e'er did fix its lightly-fibred sprays
> To the rude rock, ah! wouldst thou cling to me?
> Rough and storm-worn I am; yet love me as
> Thou truly dost, I will love thee again
> With true and honest heart, though all unmeet
> To be the mate of such sweet gentleness.

Thus the very points in which they differed seemed, in some measure, to insure the continuance of their mutual affection. If, indeed, they had so fully appreciated each other's character before the burst of passion in which they hastily pledged their faith to each other, Lucy might have feared Ravenswood too much ever to have loved him, and he might have construed her softness and docile temper as imbecility, rendering her unworthy of his regard. But they stood pledged to each other; and Lucy only feared that her lover's pride might one day teach him to regret his attachment; Ravenswood, that a mind so ductile as Lucy's might, in absence or difficulties, be induced, by the entreaties or influence of those around her, to renounce the engagement she had formed.

"Do not fear it," said Lucy, when upon one occasion a hint of such suspicion escaped her lover; "the mirrors which receive the reflection of all successive objects are framed of hard materials like glass or steel; the softer substances, when they receive an impression, retain it undefaced."

"This is poetry, Lucy," said Ravenswood; "and in poetry there is always fallacy, and sometimes fiction."

"Believe me, then, once more, in honest prose," said Lucy, "that, though I will never wed man without the consent of my parents, yet neither force nor persuasion shall dispose of my hand till you renounce the right I have given you to it."

The lovers had ample time for such explanations. Henry was now more seldom their companion, being either a most unwilling attendant upon the lessons of his tutor, or a forward volunteer under the instructions of the foresters or grooms. As for the Keeper, his mornings were spent in his study, maintaining correspondences of all kinds, and balancing in his anxious mind the various intelligence which he collected from every quarter concerning the expected change of Scottish politics, and the probable strength of the parties who were about to struggle for power. At other times he

busied himself about arranging, and countermanding, and then again arranging, the preparations which he judged necessary for the reception of the Marquis of A——, whose arrival had been twice delayed by some necessary cause of detention.

In the midst of all these various avocations, political and domestic, he seemed not to observe how much his daughter and his guest were thrown into each other's society, and was censured by many of his neighbors, according to the fashion of neighbors in all countries, for suffering such an intimate connection to take place betwixt two young persons. The only natural explanation was, that he designed them for each other; while, in truth, his only motive was to temporize and procrastinate until he should discover the real extent of the interest which the Marquis took in Ravenswood's affairs, and the power which he was likely to possess of advancing them. Until these points should be made both clear and manifest, the Lord Keeper resolved that he would do nothing to commit himself, either in one shape or other; and, like many cunning persons, he over-reached himself deplorably.

Among those who had been disposed to censure, with the greatest severity, the conduct of Sir William Ashton, in permitting the prolonged residence of Ravenswood under his roof, and his constant attendance on Miss Ashton, was the new Laird of Girnington, and his faithful squire and bottle-holder, personages formerly well known to us by the names of Hayston and Bucklaw, and his companion Captain Craigengelt. The former had at length succeeded to the extensive property of his long-lived grandaunt, and to considerable wealth besides, which he had employed in redeeming his paternal acres (by the title appertaining to which he still chose to be designated), notwithstanding Captain Craigengelt had proposed to him a most advantageous mode of vesting the money in Law's scheme, which was just then broached, and offered his services to travel express to Paris for the purpose. But Bucklaw had so far derived wisdom from adversity, that he would listen to no proposal which Craigengelt could invent, which had the slightest tendency to risk his newly-acquired independence. He that had once eat pea-bannocks, drunk sour wine, and slept in the secret chamber at Wolf's Crag, would, he said, prize good cheer and a soft bed as long as he lived, and take special care never to need such hospitality again.

Craigengelt, therefore, found himself disappointed in the first hopes he had entertained of making a good hand of the

Laird of Bucklaw. Still, however, he reaped many advantages from his friend's good fortune. Bucklaw, who had never been at all scrupulous in choosing his companions, was accustomed to, and entertained by, a fellow whom he could either laugh with or laugh at as he had a mind, who would take, according to Scottish phrase, "the bit and the buffet," understood all sports, whether within or without doors, and, when the laird had a mind for a bottle of wine (no infrequent circumstance), was always ready to save him from the scandal of getting drunk by himself. Upon these terms, Craigengelt was the frequent, almost the constant, inmate of the house of Girnington.

In no time, and under no possibility of circumstances, could good have been derived from such an intimacy, however its bad consequences might be qualified by the thorough knowledge which Bucklaw possessed of his dependant's character, and the high contempt in which he held it. But, as circumstances stood, this evil communication was particularly liable to corrupt what good principles nature had implanted in the patron.

Craigengelt had never forgiven the scorn with which Ravenswood had torn the mask of courage and honesty from his countenance; and to exasperate Bucklaw's resentment against him was the safest mode of revenge which occurred to his cowardly, yet cunning and malignant, disposition.

He brought up on all occasions the story of the challenge which Ravenswood had declined to accept, and endeavored, by every possible insinuation, to make his patron believe that his honor was concerned in bringing that matter to an issue by a present discussion with Ravenswood. But respecting this subject Bucklaw imposed on him, at length, a peremptory command of silence.

"I think," he said, "the Master has treated me unlike a gentleman, and I see no right he had to send me back a cavalier answer when I demanded the satisfaction of one. But he gave me my life once; and, in looking the matter over at present, I put myself but on equal terms with him. Should he cross me again, I shall consider the old account as balanced, and his Mastership will do well to look to himself."

"That he should," re-echoed Craigengelt; "for when you are in practice, Bucklaw, I would bet a magnum you are through him before the third pass."

"Then you know nothing of the matter," said Bucklaw, "and you never saw him fence."

"And I know nothing of the matter?" said the depend-

ant—"A good jest, I promise you! And though I never saw Ravenswood fence, have I not been at Monsieur Sagoon's school, who was the first *maître d'armes* at Paris; and have I not been at Signor Poco's at Florence, and Meinherr Durchstossen's at Vienna, and have I not seen all their play?"

"I don't know whether you have or not," said Bucklaw; "but what about it, though you had?"

"Only that I will be d—d if ever I saw French, Italian, or High-Dutchman ever make foot, hand, and eye keep time half so well as you, Bucklaw."

"I believe you lie, Craigie," said Bucklaw; "however, I can hold my own, both with single rapier, backsword, sword and dagger, broadsword, or case of falchions—and that's as much as any gentleman need know of the matter."

"And the double of what ninety-nine out of a hundred know," said Craigengelt; "they learn to change a few thrusts with the small sword, and then, forsooth, they understand the noble art of defence! Now, when I was at Rouen in the year 1695, there was a Chevalier de Chapon and I went to the opera, where we found three bits of English birkies——"

"Is it a long story you are going to tell?" said Bucklaw, interrupting him without ceremony.

"Just as you like," answered the parasite, "for we made short work of it."

"Then I like it short," said Bucklaw. "Is it serious or merry?"

"Devilish serious, I assure you, and so they found it; for the Chevalier and I——"

"Then I don't like it at all," said Bucklaw; "so fill a brimmer of my auld auntie's claret, rest her heart! And, as the Hielandman says, *Skioch doch na skiaill.*"

"That was what tough old Sir Evan Dhu used to say to me when I was out with the metalled lads in 1689. 'Craigengelt,' he used to say, 'you are as pretty a fellow as ever held steel in his grip, but you have one fault.'"

"If he had known you as long as I have done," said Bucklaw, "he would have found out some twenty more; but hang long stories, give us your toast, man."

Craigengelt rose, went a-tiptoe to the door, peeped out, shut it carefully, came back again, clapped his tarnished gold-laced hat on one side of his head, took his glass in one hand, and touching the hilt of his hanger with the other, named, "The King over the water."

"I tell you what it is, Captain Craigengelt," said Bucklaw; "I shall keep my mind to myself on these subjects,

having too much respect for the memory of my venerable Girnington to put her lands and tenements in the way of committing treason against established authority. Bring me King James to Edinburgh, Captain, with thirty thousand men at his back, and I'll tell you what I think about his title; but as for running my neck into a noose, and my good broad lands into the statutory penalties, 'in that case made and provided,' rely upon it, you will find me no such fool. So when you mean to vapor with your hanger and your dram-cup in support of treasonable toasts, you must find your liquor and company elsewhere."

"Well, then," said Craigengelt, "name the toast yourself, and be it what it like, I'll pledge you, were it a mile to the bottom."

"And I'll give you a toast that deserves it, my boy," said Bucklaw; "what say you to Miss Lucy Ashton?"

"Up with it," said the Captain, as he tossed off his brimmer, "the bonniest lass in Lothian! What a pity the old sneckdrawing Whigamore, her father, is about to throw her away upon that rag of pride and beggary, the Master of Ravenswood!"

"That's not quite so clear," said Bucklaw, in a tone which, though it seemed indifferent, excited his companion's eager curiosity; and not that only, but also his hope of working himself into some sort of confidence, which might make him necessary to his patron, being by no means satisfied to rest on mere sufferance, if he could form by art or industry a more permanent title to his favor.

"I thought," said he, after a moment's pause, "that was a settled matter; they are continually together, and nothing else is spoken of betwixt Lammer Law and Traprain."

"They may say what they please," replied his patron, "but I know better; and I'll give you Miss Lucy Ashton's health again, my boy."

"And I would drink it on my knee," said Craigengelt, "if I thought the girl had the spirit to jilt that d—d son of a Spaniard."

"I am to request you will not use the word 'jilt' and Miss Ashton's name together," said Bucklaw, gravely.

"Jilt, did I say? Discard, my lad of acres—by Jove, I meant to say discard," replied Craigengelt; "and I hope she'll discard him like a small card at piquet, and take in the king of hearts, my boy! But yet——"

"But what?" said his patron.

"But yet I know for certain they are hours together alone, and in the woods and the fields."

"That's her foolish father's dotage; that will be soon put out of the lass's head, if it ever gets into it," answered Bucklaw. "And now fill your glass again, Captain; I am going to make you happy; I am going to let you into a secret—a plot—a noosing plot—only the noose is but typical."

"A marrying matter?" said Craigengelt, and his jaw fell as he asked the question; for he suspected that matrimony would render his situation at Girnington much more precarious than during the jolly days of his patron's bachelorhood.

"Ay, a marriage, man," said Bucklaw; "but wherefore droops thy mighty spirit, and why grow the rubies on thy cheek so pale? The board will have a corner, and the corner will have a trencher, and the trencher will have a glass beside it; and the board-end shall be filled, and the trencher and the glass shall be replenished for thee, if all the petticoats in Lothian had sworn the contrary. What, man! I am not the boy to put myself into leading-strings."

"So says many an honest fellow," said Craigengelt, "and some of my special friends; but, curse me if I know the reason, the women could never bear me, and always contrived to trundle me out of favor before the honeymoon was over."

"If you could have kept your ground till that was over, you might have made a good year's pension," said Bucklaw.

"But I never could," answered the dejected parasite. "There was my Lord Castle-Cuddy—we were hand and glove: I rode his horses, borrowed money both for him and from him, trained his hawks, and taught him how to lay his bets; and when he took a fancy of marrying, I married him to Katie Glegg, whom I thought myself as sure of as man could be of woman. Egad, she had me out of the house, as if I had run on wheels, within the first fortnight!"

"Well!" replied Bucklaw, "I think I have nothing of Castle-Cuddy about me, or Lucy of Katie Glegg. But you see the thing will go on whether you like it or no; the only question is, will you be useful?"

"Useful!" exclaimed the Captain, "and to thee, my lad of lands, my darling boy, whom I would tramp barefooted through the world for! Name time, place, mode, and circumstances, and see if I will not be useful in all uses that can be devised."

"Why, then, you must ride two hundred miles for me," said the patron.

"A thousand, and call them a flea's leap," answered the dependant; "I'll cause saddle my horse directly."

"Better stay till you know where you are to go, and what

you are to do," quoth Bucklaw. "You know I have a kinswoman in Northumberland, Lady Blenkensop by name, whose old acquaintance I had the misfortune to lose in the period of my poverty, but the light of whose countenance shone forth upon me when the sun of my prosperity began to arise."

"D—n all such double-faced jades!" exclaimed Craigengelt, heroically; "this I will say for John Craigengelt, that he is his friend's friend through good report and bad report, poverty and riches; and you know something of that yourself, Bucklaw."

"I have not forgot your merits," said his patron; "I do remember that, in my extremities, you had a mind to *crimp* me for the service of the French king, or of the Pretender; and, moreover, that you afterwards lent me a score of pieces, when, as I firmly believe, you had heard the news that old Lady Girnington had a touch of the dead palsy. But don't be downcast, John; I believe, after all, you like me very well in your way, and it is my misfortune to have no better counsellor at present. To return to this Lady Blenkensop, you must know, she is a close confederate of Duchess Sarah."

"What! of Sall Jennings?" exclaimed Craigengelt; "then she must be a good one."

"Hold your tongue, and keep your Tory rants to yourself, if it be possible," said Bucklaw. "I tell you, that through the Duchess of Marlborough has this Northumbrian cousin of mine become a crony of Lady Ashton, the Keeper's wife, or, I may say, the Lord Keeper's Lady Keeper, and she has favored Lady Blenkensop with a visit on her return from London, and is just now at her old mansion-house on the banks of the Wansbeck. Now, sir, as it has been the use and wont of these ladies to consider their husbands as of no importance in the management of their own families, it has been their present pleasure, without consulting Sir William Ashton, to put on the tapis a matrimonial alliance, to be concluded between Lucy Ashton and my own right honorable self, Lady Ashton acting as self-constituted plenipotentiary on the part of her daughter and husband, and Mother Blenkensop, equally unaccredited, doing me the honor to be my representative. You may suppose I was a little astonished when I found that a treaty, in which I was so considerably interested, had advanced a good way before I was even consulted."

"Capot me! if I think that was according to the rules of the game," said his confidant; "and pray, what answer did you return?"

"Why, my first thought was to send the treaty to the

devil, and the negotiators along with it, for a couple of meddling old women; my next was to laugh very heartily; and my third and last was a settled opinion that the thing was reasonable, and would suit me well enough."

"Why, I thought you had never seen the wench but once, and then she had her riding-mask on; I am sure you told me so."

"Ay, but I liked her very well then. And Ravenswood's dirty usage of me—shutting me out of doors to dine with the lackeys, because he had the Lord Keeper, forsooth, and his daughter, to be guests in his beggarly castle of starvation,—d—n me, Craigengelt, if I ever forgive him till I play him as good a trick!"

"No more you should, if you are a lad of mettle," said Craigengelt, the matter now taking a turn in which he could sympathize; "and if you carry this wench from him, it will break his heart."

"That it will not," said Bucklaw; "his heart is all steeled over with reason and philosophy, things that you, Craigie, know nothing about more than myself, God help me. But it will break his pride, though, and that's what I'm driving at."

"Distance me!" said Craigengelt, "but I know the reason now of his unmannerly behavior at his old tumble-down tower yonder. Ashamed of your company?—no, no! Gad, he was afraid you would cut in and carry off the girl."

"Eh! Craigengelt?" said Bucklaw, "do you really think so? but no, no! he is a devilish deal prettier man than I am."

"Who—he?" exclaimed the parasite. "He's as black as the crook; and for his size—he's a tall fellow, to be sure, but give me a light, stout, middle-sized——"

"Plague on thee!" said Bucklaw, interrupting him, "and on me for listening to you! You would say as much if I were hunch-backed. But as to Ravenswood—he has kept no terms with me, I'll keep none with him; if I *can* win this girl from him, I *will* win her."

"Win her! 'sblood, you *shall* win her, point, quint, and quatorze, my king of trumps; you shall pique, repique, and capot him."

"Prithee, stop thy gambling cant for one instant," said Bucklaw. "Things have come thus far, that I have entertained the proposal of my kinswoman, agreed to the terms of jointure, amount of fortune, and so forth, and that the affair is to go forward when Lady Ashton comes down, for she

takes her daughter and her son in her own hand. Now they want me to send up a confidential person with some writings."

"By this good wine, I'll ride to the end of the world—the very gates of Jericho, and the judgment-seat of Prester John, for thee!" ejaculated the Captain.

"Why, I believe you would do something for me, and a great deal for yourself. Now, any one could carry the writings; but you will have a little more to do. You must contrive to drop out before my Lady Ashton, just as if it were a matter of little consequence, the residence of Ravenswood at her husband's house, and his close intercourse with Miss Ashton; and you may tell her that all the country talks of a visit from the Marquis of A——, as it is supposed, to make up the match betwixt Ravenswood and her daughter. I should like to hear what she says to all this; for, rat me! if I have any idea of starting for the plate at all if Ravenswood is to win the race, and he has odds against me already."

"Never a bit; the wench has too much sense, and in that belief I drink her health a third time; and, were time and place fitting, I would drink it on bended knees, and he that would not pledge me, I would make his guts garter his stockings."

"Hark ye, Craigengelt; as you are going into the society of women of rank," said Bucklaw, "I'll thank you to forget your strange blackguard oaths and 'damme's.' I'll write to them, though, that you are a blunt, untaught fellow."

"Ay, ay," replied Craigengelt—"a plain, blunt, honest, downright soldier."

"Not too honest, nor too much of the soldier neither; but such as thou art, it is my luck to need thee, for I must have spurs put to Lady Ashton's motions."

"I'll dash them up to the rowel-heads," said Craigengelt; "she shall come here at the gallop, like a cow chased by a whole nest of hornets, and her tail twisted over her rump like a corkscrew."

"And hear ye, Craigie," said Bucklaw; "your boots and doublets are good enough to drink in, as the man says in the play, but they are somewhat too greasy for tea-table service; prithee, get thyself a little better rigged out, and here is to pay all charges."

"Nay, Bucklaw; on my soul, man, you use me ill. However," added Craigengelt, pocketing the money, "if you will have me so far indebted to you, I must be conforming."

"Well, horse and away!" said the patron, "so soon as you have got your riding livery in trim. You may ride the

black crop-ear; and, hark ye, I'll make you a present of him to boot."

"I drink to the good luck of my mission," answered the ambassador, "in a half-pint bumper."

"I thank ye, Craigie, and pledge you; I see nothing against it but the father or the girl taking a tantrum, and I am told the mother can wind them both round her little finger. Take care not to affront her with any of your Jacobite jargon."

"O ay, true—she is a Whig, and a friend of old Sall of Marlborough; thank my stars, I can hoist any colors at a pinch! I have fought as hard under John Churchill as ever I did under Dundee or the Duke of Berwick."

"I verily believe you, Craigie," said the lord of the mansion; "but, Craigie, do you, pray, step down to the cellar, and fetch us up a bottle of the Burgundy, 1678; it is in the fourth bin from the right-hand turn. And I say, Craigie, you may fetch up half a dozen while you are about it. Egad, we'll make a night on't!"

CHAPTER XXII

And soon they spied the merry-men green,
And eke the coach and four.

Duke upon Duke.

Craigengelt set forth on his mission so soon as his equipage was complete, prosecuted his journey with all diligence, and accomplished his commission with all the dexterity for which Bucklaw had given him credit. As he arrived with credentials from Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw, he was extremely welcome to both ladies; and those who are prejudiced in favor of a new acquaintance can, for a time at least, discover excellences in his very faults and perfections in his deficiencies. Although both ladies were accustomed to good society, yet, being predetermined to find out an agreeable and well-behaved gentleman in Mr. Hayston's friend, they succeeded wonderfully in imposing on themselves. It is true that Craigengelt was now handsomely dressed, and that was a point of no small consequence. But, independent of outward show, his blackguard impudence of address was construed into honorable bluntness, becoming his supposed military profession; his hectoring passed for courage, and his sauciness for wit. Lest, however, any one should think this a violation of probability, we must add, in fairness to the two ladies, that their discernment was greatly blinded, and their favor propitiated, by the opportune arrival of Captain Craigengelt in the moment when they were longing for a third hand to make a party at tredrille, in which, as in all games, whether of chance or skill, that worthy person was a great proficient.

When he found himself established in favor, his next point was how best to use it for the furtherance of his patron's views. He found Lady Ashton prepossessed strongly in favor of the motion which Lady Blenkensop, partly from regard to her kinsman, partly from the spirit of match-making, had not hesitated to propose to her; so that his task was an easy one. Bucklaw, reformed from his prodigality, was just the sort of husband which she desired to have for her Shepherdess of

Lammermoor; and while the marriage gave her an easy fortune, and a respectable country gentleman for her husband, Lady Ashton was of opinion that her destinies would be fully and most favorably accomplished. It so chanced, also, that Bucklaw, among his new acquisitions, had gained the management of a little political interest in a neighboring county, where the Douglas family originally held large possessions. It was one of the bosom-hopes of Lady Ashton that her eldest son, Sholto, should represent this county in the British Parliament, and she saw this alliance with Bucklaw as a circumstance which might be highly favorable to her wishes.

Craigengelt, who, in his way, by no means wanted sagacity, no sooner discovered in what quarter the wind of Lady Ashton's wishes sat, than he trimmed his course accordingly. "There was little to prevent Bucklaw himself from sitting for the county; he must carry the heat—must walk the course. Two cousins-german, six more distant kinsmen, his factor and his chamberlain, were all hollow votes; and the Girnington interest had always carried, betwixt love and fear, about as many more. But Bucklaw cared no more about riding the first horse, and that sort of thing, than he, Craigengelt, did about a game at birkie: it was a pity his interest was not in good guidance."

All this Lady Ashton drank in with willing and attentive ears, resolving internally to be herself the person who should take the management of the political influence of her destined son-in-law, for the benefit of her eldest-born, Sholto, and all other parties concerned.

When he found her ladyship thus favorably disposed, the Captain proceeded, to use his employer's phrase, to set spurs to her resolution, by hinting at the situation of matters at Ravenswood Castle, the long residence which the heir of that family had made with the Lord Keeper, and the reports which —though he would be d—d ere he gave credit to either of them—had been idly circulated in the neighborhood. It was not the Captain's cue to appear himself to be uneasy on the subject of these rumors; but he easily saw from Lady Ashton's flushed cheek, hesitating voice, and flashing eye, that she had caught the alarm which he intended to communicate. She had not heard from her husband so often or so regularly as she thought him bound in duty to have written, and of this very interesting intelligence concerning his visit to the Tower of Wolf's Crag, and the guest whom, with such cordiality, he had received at Ravenswood Castle, he had suffered his lady

to remain altogether ignorant, until she now learned it by the chance information of a stranger. Such concealment approached, in her apprehension, to a misprision, at least, of treason, if not to actual rebellion against her matrimonial authority; and in her inward soul did she vow to take vengeance on the Lord Keeper, as on a subject detected in meditating revolt. Her indignation burned the more fiercely as she found herself obliged to suppress it in presence of Lady Blenkensop, the kinswoman, and of Craigengelt, the confidential friend, of Bucklaw, of whose alliance she now became trebly desirous, since it occurred to her alarmed imagination that her husband might, in his policy or timidity, prefer that of Ravenswood.

The Captain was engineer enough to discover that the train was fired; and therefore heard, in the course of the same day, without the least surprise, that Lady Ashton had resolved to abridge her visit to Lady Blenkensop, and set forth with the peep of morning on her return to Scotland, using all the dispatch which the state of the roads and the mode of travelling would possibly permit.

Unhappy Lord Keeper! little was he aware what a storm was travelling towards him in all the speed with which an old-fashioned coach and six could possibly achieve its journey. He, like Don Gayferos, "forgot his lady fair and true," and was only anxious about the expected visit of the Marquis of A——. Soothfast tidings had assured him that this nobleman was at length, and without fail, to honor his castle at one in the afternoon, being a late dinner-hour; and much was the bustle in consequence of the annunciation. The Lord Keeper traversed the chambers, held consultation with the butler in the cellars, and even ventured, at the risk of a *démêlé* with a cook of a spirit lofty enough to scorn the admonitions of Lady Ashton herself, to peep into the kitchen. Satisfied, at length, that everything was in as active a train of preparation as was possible, he summoned Ravenswood and his daughter to walk upon the terrace, for the purpose of watching, from that commanding position, the earliest symptoms of his lordship's approach. For this purpose, with slow and idle step, he paraded the terrace, which, flanked with a heavy stone battlement, stretched in front of the castle upon a level with the first story; while visitors found access to the court by a projecting gateway, the bartizan or flat-leaded roof of which was accessible from the terrace by an easy flight of low and broad steps. The whole bore a resemblance partly to a castle, partly to a nobleman's seat; and though calcu-

lated, in some respects, for defence, evinced that it had been constructed under a sense of the power and security of the ancient Lords of Ravenswood.

This pleasant walk commanded a beautiful and extensive view. But what was most to our present purpose, there were seen from the terrace two roads, one leading from the east, and one from the westward, which, crossing a ridge opposed to the eminence on which the castle stood, at different angles, gradually approached each other, until they joined not far from the gate of the avenue. It was to the westward approach that the Lord Keeper, from a sort of fidgeting anxiety, his daughter, from complaisance to him, and Ravenswood, though feeling some symptoms of internal impatience, out of complaisance to his daughter, directed their eyes to see the precursors of the Marquis's approach.

They were not long of presenting themselves. Two running footmen, dressed in white, with black jockey-caps, and long staffs in their hands, headed the train; and such was their agility, that they found no difficulty in keeping the necessary advance, which the etiquette of their station required, before the carriage and horsemen. Onward they came at a long swinging trot, arguing unwearied speed in their long-breathed calling. Such running footmen are often alluded to in old plays (I would particularly instance Middleton's *Mad World, my Masters*),* and perhaps may be still remembered by some old persons in Scotland, as part of the retinue of the ancient nobility when travelling in full ceremony. Behind these glancing meteors, who footed it as if the Avenger of Blood had been behind them, came a cloud of dust, raised by riders who preceded, attended, or followed the state-carriage of the Marquis.

The privilege of nobility, in those days, had something in it impressive on the imagination. The dresses and liveries and number of their attendants, their style of travelling, the imposing, and almost warlike, air of the armed men who surrounded them, placed them far above the laird, who travelled with his brace of footmen; and as to rivalry from the mercantile part of the community, these would as soon have thought of imitating the state equipage of the Sovereign. At present it is different; and I myself, Peter Pattieson, in a late journey to Edinburgh, had the honor, in the mail-coach phrase, to "change a leg" with a peer of the realm. It was not so in the days of which I write; and the Marquis's approach, so long expected in vain, now took place in the full

* See Note 9.

pomp of ancient aristocracy. Sir William Ashton was so much interested in what he beheld, and in considering the ceremonial of reception, in case any circumstance had been omitted, that he scarce heard his son Henry exclaim, "There is another coach and six coming down the east road, papa; can they both belong to the Marquis of A——?"

At length, when the youngster had fairly compelled his attention by pulling his sleeve,

> He turned his eyes, and, as he turn'd, survey'd
> An awful vision.

Sure enough, another coach and six, with four servants or outriders in attendance, was descending the hill from the eastward, at such a pace as made it doubtful which of the carriages thus approaching from different quarters would first reach the gate at the extremity of the avenue. The one coach was green, the other blue; and not the green and blue chariots in the circus of Rome or Constantinople excited more turmoil among the citizens than the double apparition occasioned in the mind of the Lord Keeper.

We all remember the terrible exclamation of the dying profligate, when a friend, to destroy what he supposed the hypochondriac idea of a spectre appearing in a certain shape at a given hour, placed before him a person dressed up in the manner he described. "*Mon Dieu!*" said the expiring sinner, who, it seems, saw both the real and polygraphic apparition, "*il y en a deux!*" The surprise of the Lord Keeper was scarcely less unpleasing at the duplication of the expected arrival; his mind misgave him strangely. There was no neighbor who would have approached so unceremoniously, at a time when ceremony was held in such respect. It must be Lady Ashton, said his conscience, and followed up the hint with an anxious anticipation of the purpose of her sudden and unannounced return. He felt that he was caught "in the manner." That the company in which she had so unluckily surprised him was likely to be highly distasteful to her, there was no question; and the only hope which remained for him was her high sense of dignified propriety, which, he trusted, might prevent a public explosion. But so active were his doubts and fears as altogether to derange his purposed ceremonial for the reception of the Marquis.

These feelings of apprehension were not confined to Sir William Ashton. "It is my mother—it is my mother!" said Lucy, turning as pale as ashes, and clasping her hands together as she looked at Ravenswood.

"And if it be Lady Ashton," said her lover to her in a low tone, "what can be the occasion of such alarm? Surely the return of a lady to the family from which she has been so long absent should excite other sensations than those of fear and dismay."

"You do not know my mother," said Miss Ashton, in a tone almost breathless with terror; "what will she say when she sees you in this place!"

"My stay has been too long," said Ravenswood, somewhat haughtily, "if her displeasure at my presence is likely to be so formidable. My dear Lucy," he resumed, in a tone of soothing encouragement, "you are too childishly afraid of Lady Ashton; she is a woman of family—a lady of fashion—a person who must know the world, and what is due to her husband and her husband's guests."

Lucy shook her head; and, as if her mother, still at the distance of half a mile, could have seen and scrutinized her deportment, she withdrew herself from beside Ravenswood, and, taking her brother Henry's arm, led him to a different part of the terrace. The Keeper also shuffled down towards the portal of the great gate, without inviting Ravenswood to accompany him; and thus he remained standing alone on the terrace, deserted and shunned, as it were, by the inhabitants of the mansion.

This suited not the mood of one who was proud in proportion to his poverty, and who thought that, in sacrificing his deep-rooted resentments so far as to become Sir William Ashton's guest, he conferred a favor, and received none. "I can forgive Lucy," he said to himself; "she is young, timid, and conscious of an important engagement assumed without her mother's sanction; yet she should remember with whom it has been assumed, and leave me no reason to suspect that she is ashamed of her choice. For the Keeper, sense, spirit, and expression seem to have left his face and manner since he had the first glimpse of Lady Ashton's carriage. I must watch how this is to end; and, if they give me reason to think myself an unwelcome guest, my visit is soon abridged."

With these suspicions floating on his mind, he left the terrace, and, walking towards the stables of the castle, gave directions that his horse should be kept in readiness, in case he should have occasion to ride abroad.

In the mean while, the drivers of the two carriages, the approach of which had occasioned so much dismay at the castle, had become aware of each other's presence, as they approached upon different lines to the head of the avenue, as a common

centre. Lady Ashton's driver and postilions instantly received orders to get foremost, if possible, her ladyship being desirous of dispatching her first interview with her husband before the arrival of these guests, whoever they might happen to be. On the other hand, the coachman of the Marquis, conscious of his own dignity and that of his master, and observing the rival charioteer was mending his pace, resolved, like a true brother of the whip, whether ancient or modern, to vindicate his right of precedence. So that, to increase the confusion of the Lord Keeper's understanding, he saw the short time which remained for consideration abridged by the haste of the contending coachmen, who, fixing their eyes sternly on each other, and applying the lash smartly to their horses, began to thunder down the descent with emulous rapidity, while the horsemen who attended them were forced to put on to a hand-gallop.

Sir William's only chance now remaining was the possibility of an overturn, and that his lady or visitor might break their necks. I am not aware that he formed any distinct wish on the subject, but I have no reason to think that his grief in either case would have been altogether inconsolable. This chance, however, also disappeared ; for Lady Ashton, though insensible to fear, began to see the ridicule of running a race with a visitor of distinction, the goal being the portal of her own castle, and commanded her coachman, as they approached the avenue, to slacken his pace, and allow precedence to the stranger's equipage ; a command which he gladly obeyed, as coming in time to save his honor, the horses of the Marquis's carriage being better, or, at least, fresher than his own. He restrained his pace, therefore, and suffered the green coach to enter the avenue, with all its retinue, which pass it occupied with the speed of a whirlwind. The Marquis's laced charioteer no sooner found the *pass d'avance* was granted to him than he resumed a more deliberate pace, at which he advanced under the embowering shade of the lofty elms, surrounded by all the attendants; while the carriage of Lady Ashton followed, still more slowly, at some distance.

In the front of the castle, and beneath the portal which admitted guests into the inner court, stood Sir William Ashton, much perplexed in mind, his younger son and daughter beside him, and in their rear a train of attendants of various ranks, in and out of livery. The nobility and gentry of Scotland, at this period, were remarkable even to extravagance for the number of their servants, whose services were easily purchased in a country where men were numerous beyond proportion to the means of employing them.

The manners of a man trained like Sir William Ashton are too much at his command to remain long disconcerted with the most adverse concurrence of circumstances. He received the Marquis, as he alighted from his equipage, with the usual compliments of welcome; and, as he ushered him into the great hall, expressed his hope that his journey had been pleasant. The Marquis was a tall, well-made man, with a thoughtful and intelligent countenance, and an eye in which the fire of ambition had for some years replaced the vivacity of youth; a bold, proud, expression of countenance, yet chastened by habitual caution, and the desire which, as the head of a party, he necessarily entertained of acquiring popularity. He answered with courtesy the courteous inquiries of the Lord Keeper, and was formally presented to Miss Ashton, in the course of which ceremony the Lord Keeper gave the first symptom of what was chiefly occupying his mind, by introducing his daughter as "his wife, Lady Ashton."

Lucy blushed; the Marquis looked surprised at the extremely juvenile appearance of his hostess, and the Lord Keeper with difficulty rallied himself so far as to explain. "I should have said my daughter, my lord; but the truth is, that I saw Lady Ashton's carriage enter the avenue shortly after your lordship's, and——"

"Make no apology, my lord," replied his noble guest; "let me entreat you will wait on your lady, and leave me to cultivate Miss Ashton's acquaintance. I am shocked my people should have taken precedence of our hostess at her own gate; but your lordship is aware that I supposed Lady Ashton was still in the south. Permit me to beseech you will waive ceremony, and hasten to welcome her."

This was precisely what the Lord Keeper longed to do; and he instantly profited by his lordship's obliging permission. To see Lady Ashton, and encounter the first burst of her displeasure in private, might prepare her, in some degree, to receive her unwelcome guests with due decorum. As her carriage, therefore, stopped, the arm of the attentive husband was ready to assist Lady Ashton in dismounting. Looking as if she saw him not, she put his arm aside, and requested that of Captain Craigengelt, who stood by the coach with his laced hat under his arm, having acted as *cavaliere servente*, or squire in attendance, during the journey. Taking hold of this respectable person's arm as if to support her, Lady Ashton traversed the court, uttering a word or two by way of direction to the servants, but not one to Sir William, who in vain endeavored to attract her attention, as he rather fol-

lowed than accompanied her into the hall, in which they found the Marquis in close conversation with the Master of Ravenswood. Lucy had taken the first opportunity of escaping. There was embarrassment on every countenance except that of the Marquis of A——; for even Craigengelt's impudence was hardly able to veil his fear of Ravenswood, and the rest felt the awkwardness of the position in which they were thus unexpectedly placed.

After waiting a moment to be presented by Sir William Ashton, the Marquis resolved to introduce himself. "The Lord Keeper," he said, bowing to Lady Ashton, "has just introduced to me his daughter as his wife; he might very easily present Lady Ashton as his daughter, so little does she differ from what I remember her some years since. Will she permit an old acquaintance the privilege of a guest?"

He saluted the lady with too good a grace to apprehend a repulse, and then proceeded—"This, Lady Ashton, is a peace-making visit, and therefore I presume to introduce my cousin, the young Master of Ravenswood, to your favorable notice."

Lady Ashton could not choose but courtesy; but there was in her obeisance an air of haughtiness approaching to contemptuous repulse. Ravenswood could not choose but bow; but his manner returned the scorn with which he had been greeted.

"Allow me," she said, "to present to your lordship *my* friend." Craigengelt, with the forward impudence which men of his cast mistake for ease, made a sliding bow to the Marquis, which he graced by a flourish of his gold-laced hat. The lady turned to her husband. "You and I, Sir William," she said, and these were the first words she had addressed to him, "have acquired new acquaintances since we parted; let me introduce the acquisition I have made to mine—Captain Craigengelt."

Another bow, and another flourish of the gold-laced hat, which was returned by the Lord Keeper without intimation of former recognition, and with that sort of anxious readiness which intimated his wish that peace and amnesty should take place betwixt the contending parties, including the auxiliaries on both sides. "Let me introduce you to the Master of Ravenswood," said he to Captain Craigengelt, following up the same amicable system.

But the Master drew up his tall form to the full extent of his height, and without so much as looking towards the person thus introduced to him, he said, in a marked tone, "Captain Craigengelt and I are already perfectly well acquainted with each other."

"Perfectly—perfectly," replied the Captain, in a mumbling tone, like that of a double echo, and with a flourish of his hat, the circumference of which was greatly abridged, compared with those which had so cordially graced his introduction to the Marquis and the Lord Keeper.

Lockhard, followed by three menials, now entered with wine and refreshments, which it was the fashion to offer as a whet before dinner; and when they were placed before the guests, Lady Ashton made an apology for withdrawing her husband from them for some minutes upon business of special import. The Marquis, of course, requested her ladyship would lay herself under no restraint; and Craigengelt, bolting with speed a second glass of racy canary, hastened to leave the room, feeling no great pleasure in the prospect of being left alone with the Marquis of A—— and the Master of Ravenswood; the presence of the former holding him in awe, and that of the latter in bodily terror.

Some arrangements about his horse and baggage formed the pretext for his sudden retreat, in which he persevered, although Lady Ashton gave Lockhard orders to be careful most particularly to accommodate Captain Craigengelt with all the attendance which he could possibly require. The Marquis and the Master of Ravenswood were thus left to communicate to each other their remarks upon the reception which they had met with, while Lady Ashton led the way, and her lord followed somewhat like a condemned criminal, to her ladyship's dressing-room.

So soon as the spouses had both entered, her ladyship gave way to that fierce audacity of temper which she had with difficulty suppressed, out of respect to appearances. She shut the door behind the alarmed Lord Keeper, took the key out of the spring-lock, and with a countenance which years had not bereft of its haughty charms, and eyes which spoke at once resolution and resentment, she addressed her astounded husband in these words: "My lord, I am not greatly surprised at the connections you have been pleased to form during my absence, they are entirely in conformity with your birth and breeding; and if I did expect anything else, I heartily own my error, and that I merit, by having done so, the disappointment you had prepared for me."

"My dear Lady Ashton—my dear Eleanor [Margaret]," said the Lord Keeper, "listen to reason for a moment, and I will convince you I have acted with all the regard due to the dignity, as well as the interest, of my family."

"To the interest of *your* family I conceive you perfectly

capable of attending," returned the indignant lady, "and even to the dignity of your own family also, as far as it requires any looking after. But as mine happens to be inextricably involved with it, you will excuse me if I choose to give my own attention so far as that is concerned."

"What would you have, Lady Ashton?" said the husband. "What is it that displeases you? Why is it that, on your return after so long an absence, I am arraigned in this manner?"

"Ask your own conscience, Sir William, what has prompted you to become a renegade to your political party and opinions, and led you, for what I know, to be on the point of marrying your only daughter to a beggarly Jacobite bankrupt, the inveterate enemy of your family to the boot."

"Why, what, in the name of common sense and common civility, would you have me do, madam?" answered her husband. "Is it possible for me, with ordinary decency, to turn a young gentleman out of my house, who saved my daughter's life and my own, but the other morning, as it were?"

"Saved your life! I have heard of that story," said the lady. "The Lord Keeper was scared by a dun cow, and he takes the young fellow who killed her for Guy of Warwick: any butcher from Haddington may soon have an equal claim on your hospitality."

"Lady Ashton," stammered the Keeper, "this is intolerable; and when I am desirous, too, to make you easy by any sacrifice, if you would but tell me what you would be at."

"Go down to your guests," said the imperious dame, "and make your apology to Ravenswood, that the arrival of Captain Craigengelt and some other friends renders it impossible for you to offer him lodgings at the castle. I expect young Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw."

"Good heavens, madam!" ejaculated her husband. "Ravenswood to give place to Craigengelt, a common gambler and an informer! It was all I could do to forbear desiring the fellow to get out of my house, and I was much surprised to see him in your ladyship's train."

"Since you saw him there, you might be well assured," answered this meek helpmate, "that he was proper society. As to this Ravenswood, he only meets with the treatment which, to my certain knowledge, he gave to a much-valued friend of mine, who had the misfortune to be his guest some time since. But take your resolution; for, if Ravenswood does not quit the house, I will."

Sir William Ashton paced up and down the apartment in

the most distressing agitation; fear, and shame, and anger contending against the habitual deference he was in the use of rendering to his lady. At length it ended, as is usual with timid minds placed in such circumstances, in his adopting a *mezzo termine*—a middle measure.

"I tell you frankly, madam, I neither can nor will be guilty of the incivility you propose to the Master of Ravenswood; he has not deserved it at my hand. If you will be so unreasonable as to insult a man of quality under your own roof, I cannot prevent you; but I will not at least be the agent in such a preposterous proceeding."

"You will not?" asked the lady.

"No, by heavens, madam!" her husband replied; "ask me anything congruent with common decency, as to drop his acquaintance by degrees, or the like; but to bid him leave my house is what I will not and cannot consent to."

"Then the task of supporting the honor of the family will fall on me, as it has often done before," said the lady.

She sat down, and hastily wrote a few lines. The Lord Keeper made another effort to prevent her taking a step so decisive, just as she opened the door to call her female attendant from the anteroom. "Think what you are doing, Lady Ashton: you are making a mortal enemy of a young man who is like to have the means of harming us——"

"Did you ever know a Douglas who feared an enemy?" answered the lady, contemptuously.

"Ay, but he is as proud and vindictive as a hundred Douglasses, and a hundred devils to boot. Think of it for a night only."

"Not for another moment," answered the lady. "Here, Mrs. Patullo, give this billet to young Ravenswood."

"To the Master, madam?" said Mrs. Patullo.

"Ay, to the Master, if you call him so."

"I wash my hands of it entirely," said the Keeper; "and I shall go down into the garden and see that Jardine gathers the winter fruit for the dessert."

"Do so," said the lady, looking after him with glances of infinite contempt; "and thank God that you leave one behind you as fit to protect the honor of the family as you are to look after pippins and pears."

The Lord Keeper remained long enough in the garden to give her ladyship's mind time to explode, and to let, as he thought, at least the first violence of Ravenswood's displeasure blow over. When he entered the hall, he found the Marquis of A—— giving orders to some of his attendants. He seemed

in high displeasure, and interrupted an apology which Sir William had commenced for having left his lordship alone.

"I presume, Sir William, you are no stranger to this singular billet with which *my* kinsman of Ravenswood [an emphasis on the word "my"] has been favored by your lady; and, of course, that you are prepared to receive my adieus. My kinsman is already gone, having thought it unnecessary to offer any on his part, since all former civilities had been cancelled by this singular insult."

"I protest, my lord," said Sir William, holding the billet in his hand, "I am not privy to the contents of this letter. I know Lady Ashton is a warm-tempered and prejudiced woman, and I am sincerely sorry for any offence that has been given or taken; but I hope your lordship will consider that a lady——"

"Should bear herself towards persons of a certain rank with the breeding of one," said the Marquis, completing the half-uttered sentence.

"True, my lord," said the unfortunate Keeper; "but Lady Ashton is still a woman——"

"And as such, methinks," said the Marquis, again interrupting him, "should be taught the duties which correspond to her station. But here she comes, and I will learn from her own mouth the reason of this extraordinary and unexpected affront offered to my near relation, while both he and I were her ladyship's guests."

Lady Ashton accordingly entered the apartment at this moment. Her dispute with Sir William, and a subsequent interview with her daughter, had not prevented her from attending to the duties of her toilette. She appeared in full dress; and, from the character of her countenance and manner, well became the splendor with which ladies of quality then appeared on such occasions.

The Marquis of A—— bowed haughtily, and she returned the salute with equal pride and distance of demeanor. He then took from the passive hand of Sir William Ashton the billet he had given him the moment before he approached the lady, and was about to speak, when she interrupted him. "I perceive, my lord, you are about to enter upon an unpleasant subject. I am sorry any such should have occurred at this time, to interrupt in the slightest degree the respectful reception due to your lordship; but so it is. Mr. Edgar Ravenswood, for whom I have addressed the billet in your lordship's hand, has abused the hospitality of this family, and Sir William Ashton's softness of temper, in order to seduce a

young person into engagements without her parents' consent, and of which they never can approve."

Both gentlemen answered at once. "My kinsman is incapable——" said the Lord Marquis.

"I am confident that my daughter Lucy is still more incapable——" said the Lord Keeper.

Lady Ashton at once interrupted and replied to them both. "My Lord Marquis, your kinsman, if Mr. Ravenswood has the honor to be so, has made the attempt privately to secure the affections of this young and inexperienced girl. Sir William Ashton, your daughter has been simple enough to give more encouragement than she ought to have done to so very improper a suitor."

"And I think, madam," said the Lord Keeper, losing his accustomed temper and patience, "that if you had nothing better to tell us, you had better have kept this family secret to yourself also."

"You will pardon me, Sir William," said the lady, calmly; "the noble Marquis has a right to know the cause of the treatment I have found it necessary to use to a gentleman whom he calls his blood-relation."

"It is a cause," muttered the Lord Keeper, "which has emerged since the effect has taken place; for, if it exists at all, I am sure she knew nothing of it when her letter to Ravenswood was written."

"It is the first time that I have heard of this," said the Marquis; "but, since your ladyship has tabled a subject so delicate, permit me to say, that my kinsman's birth and connections entitled him to a patient hearing, and at least a civil refusal, even in case of his being so ambitious as to raise his eyes to the daughter of Sir William Ashton."

"You will recollect, my lord, of what blood Miss Lucy Ashton is come by the mother's side," said the lady.

"I do remember your descent—from a younger branch of the house of Angus," said the Marquis; "and your ladyship—forgive me, lady—ought not to forget that the Ravenswoods have thrice intermarried with the main stem. Come, madam, I know how matters stand—old and long-fostered prejudices are difficult to get over, I make every allowance for them; I ought not, and I would not, otherwise have suffered my kinsman to depart alone, expelled, in a manner, from this house, but I had hopes of being a mediator. I am still unwilling to leave you in anger, and shall not set forward till after noon, as I rejoin the Master of Ravenswood upon the road a few miles from hence. Let us talk over this matter more coolly."

"It is what I anxiously desire, my lord," said Sir William Ashton, eagerly. "Lady Ashton, we will not permit my Lord of A—— to leave us in displeasure. We must compel him to tarry dinner at the castle."

"The castle," said the lady, "and all that it contains, are at the command of the Marquis, so long as he chooses to honor it with his residence; but touching the farther discussion of this disagreeable topic——"

"Pardon me, good madam," said the Marquis; "but I cannot allow you to express any hasty resolution on a subject so important. I see that more company is arriving; and, since I have the good fortune to renew my former acquaintance with Lady Ashton, I hope she will give me leave to avoid perilling what I prize so highly upon any disagreeable subject of discussion—at least till we have talked over more pleasant topics."

The lady smiled, courtesied, and gave her hand to the Marquis, by whom, with all the formal gallantry of the time, which did not permit the guest to tuck the lady of the house under the arm, as a rustic does his sweetheart at a wake, she was ushered to the eating-room.

Here they were joined by Bucklaw, Craigengelt, and other neighbors, whom the Lord Keeper had previously invited to meet the Marquis of A——. An apology, founded upon a slight indisposition, was alleged as an excuse for the absence of Miss Ashton, whose seat appeared unoccupied. The entertainment was splendid to profusion, and was protracted till a late hour.

CHAPTER XXIII

Such was our fallen father's fate,
Yet better than mine own;
He shared his exile with his mate,
I'm banish'd forth alone.

WALLER.

I WILL not attempt to describe the mixture of indignation and regret with which Ravenswood left the seat which had belonged to his ancestors. The terms in which Lady Ashton's billet was couched rendered it impossible for him, without being deficient in that spirit of which he perhaps had too much, to remain an instant longer within its walls. The Marquis, who had his share in the affront, was, nevertheless, still willing to make some efforts at conciliation. He therefore suffered his kinsman to depart alone, making him promise, however, that he would wait for him at the small inn called the Tod's Hole, situated, as our readers may be pleased to recollect, half-way betwixt Ravenswood Castle and Wolf's Crag, and about five Scottish miles distant from each. Here the Marquis proposed to join the Master of Ravenswood, either that night or the next morning. His own feelings would have induced him to have left the castle directly, but he was loth to forfeit, without at least one effort, the advantages which he had proposed from his visit to the Lord Keeper; and the Master of Ravenswood was, even in the very heat of his resentment, unwilling to foreclose any chance of reconciliation which might arise out of the partiality which Sir William Ashton had shown towards him, as well as the intercessory arguments of his noble kinsman. He himself departed without a moment's delay, farther than was necessary to make this arrangement.

At first he spurred his horse at a quick pace through an avenue of the park, as if, by rapidity of motion, he could stupefy the confusion of feelings with which he was assailed. But as the road grew wilder and more sequestered, and when the trees had hidden the turrets of the castle, he gradually slackened his pace, as if to indulge the painful reflections which he had in vain endeavored to repress. The path in which he found himself led him to the Mermaiden's Fountain,

and to the cottage of Alice; and the fatal influence which superstitious belief attached to the former spot, as well as the admonitions which had been in vain offered to him by the inhabitant of the latter, forced themselves upon his memory. "Old saws speak truth," he said to himself, "and the Mermaiden's Well has indeed witnessed the last act of rashness of the heir of Ravenswood. Alice spoke well," he continued, "and I am in the situation which she foretold; or rather, I am more deeply dishonored—not the dependant and ally of the destroyer of my father's house, as the old sibyl presaged, but the degraded wretch who has aspired to hold that subordinate character, and has been rejected with disdain."

We are bound to tell the tale as we have received it; and, considering the distance of the time, and propensity of those through whose mouths it has passed to the marvellous, this could not be called a Scottish story unless it manifested a tinge of Scottish superstition. As Ravenswood approached the solitary fountain, he is said to have met with the following singular adventure: His horse, which was moving slowly forward, suddenly interrupted its steady and composed pace, snorted, reared, and, though urged by the spur, refused to proceed, as if some object of terror had suddenly presented itself. On looking to the fountain, Ravenswood discerned a female figure, dressed in a white, or rather grayish, mantle, placed on the very spot on which Lucy Ashton had reclined while listening to the fatal tale of love. His immediate impression was that she had conjectured by which path he would traverse the park on his departure, and placed herself at this well-known and sequestered place of rendezvous, to indulge her own sorrow and his in a parting interview. In this belief he jumped from his horse, and, making its bridle fast to a tree, walked hastily towards the fountain, pronouncing eagerly, yet under his breath, the words, "Miss Ashton!—Lucy!"

The figure turned as he addressed it, and displayed to his wondering eyes the features, not of Lucy Ashton, but of old blind Alice. The singularity of her dress, which rather resembled a shroud than the garment of a living woman; the appearance of her person, larger, as it struck him, than it usually seemed to be; above all, the strange circumstance of a blind, infirm, and decrepit person being found alone and at a distance from her habitation (considerable, if her infirmities be taken into account), combined to impress him with a feeling of wonder approaching to fear. As he approached, she arose slowly from her seat, held her shrivelled hand up as if to prevent his coming more near, and her withered lips moved fast,

although no sound issued from them. Ravenswood stopped; and as, after a moment's pause, he again advanced towards her, Alice, or her apparition, moved or glided backwards towards the thicket, still keeping her face turned towards him. The trees soon hid the form from his sight, and, yielding to the strong and terrific impression that the being which he had seen was not of this world, the Master of Ravenswood remained rooted to the ground whereon he had stood when he caught his last view of her. At length, summoning up his courage, he advanced to the spot on which the figure had seemed to be seated; but neither was there pressure of the grass nor any other circumstance to induce him to believe that what he had seen was real and substantial.

Full of those strange thoughts and confused apprehensions which awake in the bosom of one who conceives he has witnessed some preternatural appearance, the Master of Ravenswood walked back towards his horse, frequently, however, looking behind him, not without apprehension, as if expecting that the vision would reappear. But the apparition, whether it was real or whether it was the creation of a heated and agitated imagination, returned not again; and he found his horse sweating and terrified, as if experiencing that agony of fear with which the presence of a supernatural being is supposed to agitate the brute creation. The Master mounted, and rode slowly forward, soothing his steed from time to time, while the animal seemed internally to shrink and shudder, as if expecting some new object of fear at the opening of every glade. The rider, after a moment's consideration, resolved to investigate the matter farther. "Can my eyes have deceived me," he said, "and deceived me for such a space of time? Or are this woman's infirmities but feigned, in order to excite compassion? And even then, her motion resembled not that of a living and existing person. Must I adopt the popular creed, and think that the unhappy being has formed a league with the powers of darkness? I am determined to be resolved; I will not brook imposition even from my own eyes."

In this uncertainty he rode up to the little wicket of Alice's garden. Her seat beneath the birch-tree was vacant, though the day was pleasant and the sun was high. He approached the hut, and heard from within the sobs and wailing of a female. No answer was returned when he knocked, so that, after a moment's pause, he lifted the latch and entered. It was indeed a house of solitude and sorrow. Stretched upon her miserable pallet lay the corpse of the last

retainer of the house of Ravenswood who still abode on their paternal domains! Life had but shortly departed; and the little girl by whom she had been attended in her last moments was wringing her hands and sobbing, betwixt childish fear and sorrow, over the body of her mistress.

The Master of Ravenswood had some difficulty to compose the terrors of the poor child, whom his unexpected appearance had at first rather appalled than comforted; and when he succeeded, the first expression which the girl used intimated that "he had come too late." Upon inquiring the meaning of this expression, he learned that the deceased, upon the first attack of the mortal agony, had sent a peasant to the castle to beseech an interview of the Master of Ravenswood, and had expressed the utmost impatience for his return. But the messengers of the poor are tardy and negligent: the fellow had not reached the castle, as was afterwards learned, until Ravenswood had left it, and had then found too much amusement among the retinue of the strangers to return in any haste to the cottage of Alice. Meantime her anxiety of mind seemed to increase with the agony of her body; and, to use the phrase of Babie, her only attendant, "she prayed powerfully that she might see her master's son once more, and renew her warning." She died just as the clock in the distant village tolled one; and Ravenswood remembered, with internal shuddering, that he had heard the chime sound through the wood just before he had seen what he was now much disposed to consider as the spectre of the deceased.

It was necessary, as well from his respect to the departed as in common humanity to her terrified attendant, that he should take some measures to relieve the girl from her distressing situation. The deceased, he understood, had expressed a desire to be buried in a solitary churchyard, near the little inn of the Tod's Hole, called the Hermitage, or more commonly Armitage, in which lay interred some of the Ravenswood family, and many of their followers. Ravenswood conceived it his duty to gratify this predilection, so commonly found to exist among the Scottish peasantry, and dispatched Babie to the neighboring village to procure the assistance of some females, assuring her that, in the mean while, he would himself remain with the dead body, which, as in Thessaly of old, it is accounted highly unfit to leave without a watch.

Thus, in the course of a quarter of an hour or little more, he found himself sitting a solitary guard over the inanimate corpse of her whose dismissed spirit, unless his eyes had

strangely deceived him, had so recently manifested itself before him. Notwithstanding his natural courage, the Master was considerably affected by a concurrence of circumstances so extraordinary. "She died expressing her eager desire to see me. Can it be, then," was his natural course of reflection —"can strong and earnest wishes, formed during the last agony of nature, survive its catastrophe, surmount the awful bounds of the spiritual world, and place before us its inhabitants in the hues and coloring of life? And why was that manifested to the eye which could not unfold its tale to the ear? and wherefore should a breach be made in the laws of nature, yet its purpose remain unknown? Vain questions, which only death, when it shall make me like the pale and withered form before me, can ever resolve."

He laid a cloth, as he spoke, over the lifeless face, upon whose features he felt unwilling any longer to dwell. He then took his place in an old carved oaken chair, ornamented with his own armorial bearings, which Alice had contrived to appropriate to her own use in the pillage which took place among creditors, officers, domestics, and messengers of the law when his father left Ravenswood Castle for the last time. Thus seated, he banished, as much as he could, the superstitious feelings which the late incident inspired. His own were sad enough, without the exaggeration of supernatural terror, since he found himself transferred from the situation of a successful lover of Lucy Ashton, and an honored and respected friend of her father, into the melancholy and solitary guardian of the abandoned and forsaken corpse of a common pauper.

He was relieved, however, from his sad office sooner than he could reasonably have expected, considering the distance betwixt the hut of the deceased and the village, and the age and infirmities of three old women who came from thence, in military phrase, to relieve guard upon the body of the defunct. On any other occasion the speed of these reverend sibyls would have been much more moderate, for the first was eighty years of age and upwards, the second was paralytic, and the third lame of a leg from some accident. But the burial duties rendered to the deceased are, to the Scottish peasant of either sex, a labor of love. I know not whether it is from the temper of the people, grave and enthusiastic as it certainly is, or from the recollection of the ancient Catholic opinions, when the funeral rites were always considered as a period of festival to the living; but feasting, good cheer, and even inebriety, were, and are, the frequent accompaniments of a Scottish old-fashioned burial. What the funeral

feast, or "dirgie," as it is called, was to the men, the gloomy preparations of the dead body for the coffin were to the women. To straighten the contorted limbs upon a board used for that melancholy purpose, to array the corpse in clean linen, and over that in its woollen shroud, were operations committed always to the old matrons of the village, and in which they found a singular and gloomy delight.

The old women paid the Master their salutations with a ghastly smile, which reminded him of the meeting betwixt Macbeth and the witches on the blasted heath of Forres. He gave them some money, and recommended to them the charge of the dead body of their contemporary, an office which they willingly undertook; intimating to him at the same time that he must leave the hut, in order that they might begin their mournful duties. Ravenswood readily agreed to depart, only tarrying to recommend to them due attention to the body, and to receive information where he was to find the sexton, or beadle, who had in charge the deserted churchyard of the Armitage, in order to prepare matters for the reception of Old Alice in the place of repose which she had selected for herself.

"Ye'll no be pinched to find out Johnie Mortsheugh," said the elder sibyl, and still her withered cheek bore a grisly smile; "he dwells near the Tod's Hole, a house of entertainment where there has been mony a blithe birling, for death and drink-draining are near neighbors to ane anither."

"Ay! and that's e'en true, cummer," said the lame hag, propping herself with a crutch which supported the shortness of her left leg, "for I mind when the father of this Master of Ravenswood that is now standing before us sticked young Blackhall with his whinger, for a wrang word said ower their wine, or brandy, or what-not: he gaed in as light as a lark, and he came out wi' his feet foremost. I was at the winding of the corpse; and when the bluid was washed off, he was a bonny bouk of man's body."

It may be easily believed that this ill-timed anecdote hastened the Master's purpose of quitting a company so evil-omened and so odious. Yet, while walking to the tree to which his horse was tied, and busying himself with adjusting the girths of the saddle, he could not avoid hearing, through the hedge of the little garden, a conversation respecting himself, betwixt the lame woman and the octogenarian sibyl. The pair had hobbled into the garden to gather rosemary, southern-wood, rue, and other plants proper to be strewed upon the body, and burned by way of fumigation in the chimney of the

cottage. The paralytic wretch, almost exhausted by the journey, was left guard upon the corpse, lest witches or fiends might play their sport with it.

The following low, croaking dialogue was necessarily overheard by the Master of Ravenswood:

"That's a fresh and full-grown hemlock, Annie Winnie; mony a cummer lang syne wad hae sought nae better horse to flee over hill and how, through mist and moonlight, and light down in the King of France's cellar."

"Ay, cummer! but the very deil has turned as hard-hearted now as the Lord Keeper and the grit folk, that hae breasts like whinstane. They prick us and they pine us, and they pit us on the pinnywinkles for witches; and, if I say my prayers backwards ten times ower, Satan will never gie me amends o' them."

"Did ye ever see the foul thief?" asked her neighbor.

"Na!" replied the other spokeswoman; "but I trow I hae dreamed of him mony a time, and I think the day will come they will burn me for't. But ne'er mind, cummer! we hae this dollar of the Master's, and we'll send doun for bread and for yill, and tobacco, and a drap brandy to burn, and a wee pickle saft sugar; and be there deil, or na deil, lass, we'll hae a merry night o't."

Here her leathern chops uttered a sort of cackling, ghastly laugh, resembling, to a certain degree, the cry of the screech-owl.

"He's a frank man, and a free-handed man, the Master," said Annie Winnie, "and a comely personage—broad in the shouthers, and narrow around the lunyies. He wad mak a bonny corpse; I wad like to hae the streiking and winding o' him."

"It is written on his brow, Annie Winnie," returned the octogenarian, her companion, "that hand of woman, or of man either, will never straught him: dead-deal will never be laid on his back, make you your market of that, for I hae it frae a sure hand."

"Will it be his lot to die on the battle-ground then, Ailsie Gourlay? Will he die by the sword or the ball, as his forbears hae dune before him, mony ane o' them?"

"Ask nae mair questions about it—he'll no be graced sae far," replied the sage.

"I ken ye are wiser than ither folk, Ailsie Gourlay. But wha telled ye this?"

"Fashna your thumb about that, Annie Winnie," answered the sibyl, "I hae it frae a hand sure eneugh."

"But ye said ye never saw the foul thief," reiterated her inquisitive companion.

"I hae it frae as sure a hand," said Ailsie, "and frae them that spaed his fortune before the sark gaed ower his head."

"Hark! I hear his horse's feet riding aff," said the other; "they dinna sound as if good luck was wi' them."

"Mak haste, sirs," cried the paralytic hag from the cottage, "and let us do what is needfu', and say what is fitting; for, if the dead corpse binna straughted, it will girn and thraw, and that will fear the best o' us."

Ravenswood was now out of hearing. He despised most of the ordinary prejudices about witchcraft, omens, and vaticination, to which his age and country still gave such implicit credit that to express a doubt of them was accounted a crime equal to the unbelief of Jews or Saracens; he knew also that the prevailing belief concerning witches, operating upon the hypochondriac habits of those whom age, infirmity, and poverty rendered liable to suspicion, and enforced by the fear of death and the pangs of the most cruel tortures, often extorted those confessions which encumber and disgrace the criminal records of Scotland during the 17th century. But the vision of that morning, whether real or imaginary, had impressed his mind with a superstitious feeling which he in vain endeavored to shake off. The nature of the business which awaited him at the little inn, called Tod's Hole, where he soon after arrived, was not of a kind to restore his spirits.

It was necessary he should see Mortsheugh, the sexton of the old burial-ground at Armitage, to arrange matters for the funeral of Alice; and, as the man dwelt near the place of her late residence, the Master, after a slight refreshment, walked towards the place where the body of Alice was to be deposited. It was situated in the nook formed by the eddying sweep of a stream, which issued from the adjoining hills. A rude cavern in an adjacent rock, which, in the interior, was cut into the shape of a cross, formed the hermitage, where some Saxon saint had in ancient times done penance, and given name to the place. The rich Abbey of Coldinghame had, in latter days, established a chapel in the neighborhood, of which no vestige was now visible, though the churchyard which surrounded it was still, as upon the present occasion, used for the interment of particular persons. One or two shattered yew-trees still grew within the precincts of that which had once been holy ground. Warriors and barons had been buried there of old, but their names were forgotten, and their monuments de-

molished. The only sepulchral memorials which remained were the upright headstones which mark the graves of persons of inferior rank. The abode of the sexton was a solitary cottage adjacent to the ruined wall of the cemetery, but so low that, with its thatch, which nearly reached the ground, covered with a thick crop of grass, fog, and house-leeks, it resembled an overgrown grave. On inquiry, however, Ravenswood found that the man of the last mattock was absent at a bridal, being fiddler as well as grave-digger to the vicinity. He therefore retired to the little inn, leaving a message that early next morning he would again call for the person whose double occupation connected him at once with the house of mourning and the house of feasting.

An outrider of the Marquis arrived at Tod's Hole shortly after with a message, intimating that his master would join Ravenswood at that place on the following morning; and the Master, who would otherwise have proceeded to his old retreat at Wolf's Crag, remained there accordingly to give meeting to his noble kinsman.

CHAPTER XXIV

Hamlet. Has this fellow no feeling of his business? he sings at grave-making.
Horatio. Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.
Hamlet. 'Tis e'en so: the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

Hamlet, Act V., Scene 1

THE sleep of Ravenswood was broken by ghastly and agitating visions, and his waking intervals disturbed by melancholy reflections of the past and painful anticipations of the future. He was perhaps the only traveller who ever slept in that miserable kennel without complaining of his lodgings, or feeling inconvenience from their deficiencies. It is when "the mind is free the body's delicate." Morning, however, found the Master an early riser, in hopes that the fresh air of the dawn might afford the refreshment which night had refused him. He took his way toward the solitary burial-ground, which lay about half a mile from the inn.

The thin blue smoke, which already began to curl upward, and to distinguish the cottage of the living from the habitation of the dead, apprised him that its inmate had returned and was stirring. Accordingly, on entering the little churchyard, he saw the old man laboring in a half-made grave. "My destiny," thought Ravenswood, "seems to lead me to scenes of fate and of death; but these are childish thoughts, and they shall not master me. I will not again suffer my imagination to beguile my senses." The old man rested on his spade as the Master approached him, as if to receive his commands; and as he did not immediately speak, the sexton opened the discourse in his own way.

"Ye will be a wedding customer, sir, I'se warrant?

"What makes you think so, friend?" replied the Master.

"I live by twa trades, sir," replied the blithe old man—"fiddle, sir, and spade; filling the world, and emptying of it; and I suld ken baith cast of customers by head-mark in thirty years' practice."

"You are mistaken, however, this morning," replied Ravenswood.

"Am I?" said the old man, looking keenly at him,

"troth and it may be; since, for as brent as your brow is, there is something sitting upon it this day that is as near akin to death as to wedlock. Weel—weel; the pick and shovel are as ready to your order as bow and fiddle."

"I wish you," said Ravenswood, "to look after the decent interment of an old woman, Alice Gray, who lived at the Craigfoot in Ravenswood Park."

"Alice Gray!—blind Alice!" said the sexton; "and is she gane at last? that's another jow of the bell to bid me be ready. I mind when Habbie Gray brought her down to this land; a likely lass she was then, and looked ower her southland nose at us a'. I trow her pride got a downcome. And is she e'en gane?"

"She died yesterday," said Ravenswood; "and desired to be buried here beside her husband; you know where he lies, no doubt?"

"Kenw here he lies!" answered the sexton, with national indirection of response. "I ken whar a'body lies, that lies here. But ye were speaking o' her grave? Lord help us, it's no an ordinar grave that will haud her in, if a's true that folk said of Alice in her auld days; and if I gae to six feet deep—and a warlock's grave shouldna be an inch mair ebb, or her ain witch cummers would soon whirl her out of her shroud for a' their auld acquaintance—and be't six feet, or be't three, wha's to pay the making o't, I pray ye?"

"I will pay that, my friend, and all other reasonable charges."

"Reasonable charges!" said the sexton; "ou, there's grund-mail—and bell-siller, though the bell's broken, nae doubt—and the kist—and my day's wark—and my bit fee—and some brandy and yill to the dirgie; I am no thinking that you can inter her, to ca' decently, under saxteen pund Scots."

"There is the money, my friend," said Ravenswood, "and something over. Be sure you know the grave."

"Ye'll be ane o' her English relations, I'se warrant," said the hoary man of skulls; "I hae heard she married far below her station. It was very right to let her bite on the bridle when she was living, and it's very right to gie her a decent burial now she's dead, for that's a matter o' credit to yoursell rather than to her. Folk may let their kindred shift for themsells when they are alive, and can bear the burden of their ain misdoings; but it's an unnatural thing to let them be buried like dogs, when a' the discredit gangs to the kindred. What kens the dead corpse about it?"

"You would not have people neglect their relations on a bridal occasion neither?" said Ravenswood, who was amused with the professional limitation of the grave-digger's philanthropy.

The old man cast up his sharp gray eyes with a shrewd smile, as if he understood the jest, but instantly continued, with his former gravity, "Bridals—wha wad neglect bridals that had ony regard for plenishing the earth? To be sure, they suld be celebrated with all manner of good cheer, and meeting of friends, and musical instruments—harp, sackbut, and psaltery; or gude fiddle and pipes, when these auld-warld instruments of melody are hard to be compassed."

"The presence of the fiddle, I dare say," replied Ravenswood, "would atone for the absence of all the others."

The sexton again looked sharply up at him, as he answered, "Nae doubt—nae doubt, if it were weel played; but yonder," he said, as if to change the discourse, "is Halbert Gray's lang hame, that ye were speering after, just the third bourock beyond the muckle through-stane that stands on sax legs yonder, abune some ane of the Ravenswoods; for there is mony of their kin and followers here, deil lift them! though it isna just their main burial-place."

"They are no favorites, then, of yours, these Ravenswoods?" said the Master, not much pleased with the passing benediction which was thus bestowed on his family and name.

"I kenna wha should favor them," said the grave-digger; "when they had lands and power, they were ill guides of them baith, and now their head's down, there's few care how lang they may be of lifting it again."

"Indeed!" said Ravenswood; "I never heard that this unhappy family deserved ill-will at the hands of their country. I grant their poverty, if that renders them contemptible."

"It will gang a far way till't," said the sexton of Hermitage, "ye may tak my word for that; at least, I ken naething else that suld mak myself contemptible, and folk are far frae respecting me as they wad do if I lived in a twa-lofted sclated house. But as for the Ravenswoods, I hae seen three generations of them, and deil ane to mend other."

"I thought they had enjoyed a fair character in the country," said their descendant.

"Character! Ou, ye see, sir," said the sexton, "as for the auld gudesire body of a lord, I lived on his land when I was a swanking young chield, and could hae blawn the trumpet wi' onybody, for I had wind eneugh then; and touching

this trumpeter Marine * that I had heard play afore the lords of the circuit, I wad hae made nae mair o' him than of a bairn and a bawbee whistle. I defy him to hae played 'Boot and saddle,' or 'Horse and away,' or 'Gallants, come trot,' with me; he hadna the tones."

"But what is all this to old Lord Ravenswood, my friend?" said the Master, who, with an anxiety not unnatural in his circumstances, was desirous of prosecuting the musician's first topic—"what had his memory to do with the degeneracy of the trumpet music?"

"Just this, sir," answered the sexton, "that I lost my wind in his service. Ye see I was trumpeter at the castle, and had allowance for blawing at break of day, and at dinner time, and other whiles when there was company about, and it pleased my lord; and when he raised his militia to caper awa' to Bothwell Brig against the wrang-headed wastland Whigs, I behoved, reason or nane, to munt a horse and caper awa' wi' them."

"And very reasonable," said Ravenswood; "you were his servant and vassal."

"Servitor, say ye?" replied the sexton, "and so I was; but it was to blaw folk to their warm dinner, or at the warst to a decent kirkyard, and no to skirl them awa' to a bluidy braeside, where there was deil a bedral but the hooded craw. But bide ye, ye shall hear what cam o't, and how far I am bund to be bedesman to the Ravenswoods. Till't, ye see, we gaed on a braw simmer morning, twenty-fourth of June, saxteen hundred and se'enty-nine, of a' the days of the month and year—drums beat, guns rattled, horses kicked and trampled. Hackstoun of Rathillet keepit the brig wi' musket and carabine and pike, sword and scythe for what I ken, and we horsemen were ordered down to cross at the ford,—I hate fords at a' times, let abee when there's thousands of armed men on the other side. There was auld Ravenswood brandishing his Andrew Ferrara at the head, and crying to us to come and buckle to, as if we had been gaun to a fair; there was Caleb Balderstone, that is living yet, flourishing in the rear, and swearing Gog and Magog, he would put steel through the guts of ony man that turned bridle; there was young Allan Ravenswood, that was then Master, wi' a bended pistol in his hand—it was a mercy it gaed na aff!—crying to me, that had scarce as much wind left as serve the necessary purpose of my ain lungs, 'Sound, you poltroon!—sound, you damned cowardly villain, or I will blow your brains out!'

* See Note 10.

and, to be sure, I blew sic points of war that the scraugh of a clockin-hen was music to them."

"Well, sir, cut all this short," said Ravenswood.

"Short! I had like to hae been cut short mysell, in the flower of my youth, as Scripture says; and that's the very thing that I compleen o'. Weel! into the water we behoved a' to splash, heels ower head, sit or fa'—ae horse driving on anither, as is the way of brute beasts, and riders that hae as little sense; the very bushes on the ither side were ableeze wi' the flashes of the Whig guns; and my horse had just taen the grund, when a blackavised westland carle—I wad mind the face o' him a hundred years yet—an ee like a wild falcon's, and a beard as broad as my shovel—clapped the end o' his lang black gun within a quarter's length of my lug! By the grace o' Mercy, the horse swarved round, and I fell aff at the tae side as the ball whistled by at the tither, and the fell auld lord took the Whig such a swauk wi' his broadsword that he made twa pieces o' his head, and down fell the lurdane wi' a' his bouk abune me."

"You were rather obliged to the old lord, I think," said Ravenswood.

"Was I? my sartie! first for bringing me into jeopardy, would I nould I, and then for whomling a chield on the tap o' me that dang the very wind out of my body? I hae been short-breathed ever since, and canna gang twenty yards without peghing like a miller's aiver."

"You lost, then, your place as trumpeter?" said Ravenswood.

"Lost it! to be sure I lost it," replied the sexton, "for I couldna hae played pew upon a dry humlock; but I might hae dune weel eneugh, for I keepit the wage and the free house, and little to do but play on the fiddle to them, but for Allan, last Lord Ravenswood, that was far waur than ever his father was."

"What," said the Master, "did my father—I mean, did his father's son—this last Lord Ravenswood, deprive you of what the bounty of his father allowed you?"

"Ay, troth did he," answered the old man; "for he loot his affairs gang to the dogs, and let in this Sir William Ashton on us, that will gie naething for naething, and just removed me and a' the puir creatures that had bite and soup at the castle, and a hole to put our heads in, when things were in the auld way."

"If Lord Ravenswood protected his people, my friend, while he had the means of doing so, I think they might spare his memory," replied the Master.

"Ye are welcome to your ain opinion, sir," said the sexton; "but ye winna persuade me that he did his duty, either to himsell or to huz puir dependent creatures, in guiding us the gate he has done; he might hae gien us life-rent tacks of our bits o' houses and yards; and me, that's an auld man, living in yon miserable cabin, that's fitter for the dead than the quick, and killed wi' rheumatise, and John Smith in my dainty bit mailing, and his window glazen, and a' because Ravenswood guided his gear like a fule!"

"It is but too true," said Ravenswood, conscience-struck; "the penalties of extravagance extend far beyond the prodigal's own sufferings."

"However," said the sexton, "this young man Edgar is like to avenge my wrangs on the haill of his kindred."

"Indeed?" said Ravenswood; "why should you suppose so?"

"They say he is about to marry the daughter of Leddy Ashton; and let her leddyship get his head ance under her oxter, and see you if she winna gie his neck a thraw. Sorra a bit, if I were him! Let her alane for hauding a'thing in het water that draws near her. Sae the warst wish I shall wish the lad is, that he may take his ain creditable gate o't, and ally himsell wi' his father's enemies, that have taken his broad lands and my bonny kail-yard from the lawful owners thereof."

Cervantes acutely remarks, that flattery is pleasing even from the mouth of a madman; and censure, as well as praise, often affects us, while we despise the opinions and motives on which it is founded and expressed. Ravenswood, abruptly reiterating his command that Alice's funeral should be attended to, flung away from the sexton, under the painful impression that the great as well as the small vulgar would think of his engagement with Lucy like this ignorant and selfish peasant.

"And I have stooped to subject myself to these calumnies, and am rejected notwithstanding! Lucy, your faith must be true and perfect as the diamond to compensate for the dishonor which men's opinions, and the conduct of your mother, attach to the heir of Ravenswood!"

As he raised his eyes, he beheld the Marquis of A——, who, having arrived at the Tod's Hole, had walked forth to look for his kinsman.

After mutual greetings, he made some apology to the Master for not coming forward on the preceding evening. It was his wish," he said, "to have done so, but he had

come to the knowledge of some matters which induced him to delay his purpose. I find," he proceeded, "there has been a love affair here, kinsman; and though I might blame you for not having communicated with me, as being in some degree the chief of your family——"

"With your lordship's permission," said Ravenswood, "I am deeply grateful for the interest you are pleased to take in me, but *I* am the chief and head of my family."

"I know it—I know it," said the Marquis; "in a strict heraldic and genealogical sense, you certainly are so; what I mean is, that being in some measure under my guardianship——"

"I must take the liberty to say, my lord——" answered Ravenswood, and the tone in which he interrupted the Marquis boded no long duration to the friendship of the noble relatives, when he himself was interrupted by the little sexton, who came puffing after them, to ask if their honors would choose music at the change-house to make up for short cheer.

"We want no music," said the Master, abruptly.

"Your honor disna ken what ye're refusing, then," said the fiddler, with the impertinent freedom of his profession. "I can play 'Wilt thou do't again,' and 'The Auld Man's Mear's Dead,' sax times better than ever Patie Birnie.* I'll get my fiddle in the turning of a coffin-screw.'

"Take yourself away, sir," said the Marquis.

"And if your honor be a north-country gentleman," said the persevering minstrel, "whilk I wad judge from your tongue, I can play 'Liggeram Cosh,' and 'Mullin Dhu,' and 'The Cummers of Athole.'"

"Take yourself away, friend; you interrupt our conversation."

"Or if, under your honor's favor, ye should happen to be a thought honest, I can play [this in a low and confidential tone] 'Killiecrankie,' and 'The King shall hae his ain,' and 'The Auld Stuarts back again;' and the wife at the change-house is a decent, discreet body, neither kens nor cares what toasts are drucken, and what tunes are played, in her house: she's deaf to a'thing but the clink o' the siller."

The Marquis, who was sometimes suspected of Jacobitism, could not help laughing as he threw the fellow a dollar, and bid him go play to the servants if he had a mind, and leave them at peace.

* A celebrated fiddler and songster of Kinghorn. See Allan Ramsay's *Collected Poems*, ed. 1721 (*Laing*).

"Aweel, gentlemen," said he, "I am wishing your honors gude day. I'll be a' the better of the dollar, and ye'll be the waur of wanting the music, I'se tell ye. But I'se gang hame, and finish the grave in the tuning o' a fiddle-string, lay by my spade, and then get my tother bread-winner, and awa' to your folk, and see if they hae better lugs than their masters."

CHAPTER XXV

True love, an thou be true,
  Thou has ane kittle part to play;
For fortune, fashion, fancy, and thou,
  Maun strive for many a day.

I've kend by mony a friend's tale,
  Far better by this heart of mine,
What time and change of fancy avail
  A true-love knot to untwine.

HENDERSOUN.

"I WISHED to tell you, my good kinsman," said the Marquis, "now that we are quit of that impertinent fiddler, that I had tried to discuss this love affair of yours with Sir William Ashton's daughter. I never saw the young lady but for a few minutes to-day; so, being a stranger to her personal merits, I pay a compliment to you, and offer her no offence, in saying you might do better."

"My lord, I am much indebted for the interest you have taken in my affairs," said Ravenswood. "I did not intend to have troubled you in any matter concerning Miss Ashton. As my engagement with that young lady has reached your lordship, I can only say, that you must necessarily suppose that I was aware of the objections to my marrying into her father's family, and of course must have been completely satisfied with the reasons by which these objections are overbalanced, since I have proceeded so far in the matter."

"Nay, Master, if you had heard me out," said his noble relation, "you might have spared that observation; for, without questioning that you had reasons which seemed to you to counterbalance every other obstacle, I set myself, by every means that it became me to use towards the Ashtons, to persuade them to meet your views."

"I am obliged to your lordship for your unsolicited intercession," said Ravenswood; "especially as I am sure your lordship would never carry it beyond the bounds which it became me to use."

"Of that," said the Marquis, "you may be confident; I myself felt the delicacy of the matter too much to place a gen-

tleman nearly connected with my house in a degrading or dubious situation with these Ashtons. But I pointed out all the advantages of their marrying their daughter into a house so honorable, and so nearly related with the first in Scotland; I explained the exact degree of relationship in which the Ravenswoods stand to ourselves; and I even hinted how political matters were like to turn, and what cards would be trumps next Parliament. I said I regarded you as a son—or a nephew, or so—rather than as a more distant relation; and that I made your affair entirely my own."

"And what was the issue of your lordship's explanation?" said Ravenswood, in some doubt whether he should resent or express gratitude for his interference.

"Why, the Lord Keeper would have listened to reason," said the Marquis; "he is rather unwilling to leave his place, which, in the present view of a change, must be vacated; and, to say truth, he seemed to have a liking for you, and to be sensible of the general advantages to be attained by such a match. But his lady, who is tongue of the trump, Master——"

"What of Lady Ashton, my lord?" said Ravenswood; "let me know the issue of this extraordinary conference: I can bear it."

"I am glad of that, kinsman," said the Marquis, "for I am ashamed to tell you half what she said. It is enough—her mind is made up, and the mistress of a first-rate boarding-school could not have rejected with more haughty indifference the suit of a half-pay Irish officer, beseeching permission to wait upon the heiress of a West India planter, than Lady Ashton spurned every proposal of mediation which it could at all become me to offer in behalf of you, my good kinsman. I cannot guess what she means. A more honorable connection she could not form, that's certain. As for money and land, that used to be her husband's business rather than hers; I really think she hates you for having the rank which her husband has not, and perhaps for not having the lands that her goodman has. But I should only vex you to say more about it—here we are at the change-house."

The Master of Ravenswood paused as he entered the cottage, which reeked through all its crevices, and they were not few, from the exertions of the Marquis's travelling-cooks to supply good cheer, and spread, as it were, a table in the wilderness.

"My Lord Marquis," said Ravenswood, "I already mentioned that accident has put your lordship in possession of a

secret which, with my consent, should have remained one even to you, my kinsman, for some time. Since the secret was to part from my own custody, and that of the only person besides who was interested in it, I am not sorry it should have reached your lordship's ears, as being fully aware that you are my noble kinsman and friend."

"You may believe it is safely lodged with me, Master of Ravenswood," said the Marquis; "but I should like well to hear you say that you renounced the idea of an alliance which you can hardly pursue without a certain degree of degradation."

"Of that, my lord, I shall judge," answered Ravenswood, "and I hope with delicacy as sensitive as any of my friends. But I have no engagement with Sir William and Lady Ashton. It is with Miss Ashton alone that I have entered upon the subject, and my conduct in the matter shall be entirely ruled by hers. If she continues to prefer me in my poverty to the wealthier suitors whom her friends recommend, I may well make some sacrifice to her sincere affection: I may well surrender to her the less tangible and less palpable advantages of birth, and the deep-rooted prejudices of family hatred. If Miss Lucy Ashton should change her mind on a subject of such delicacy, I trust my friends will be silent on my disappointment, and I shall know how to make my enemies so."

"Spoke like a gallant young nobleman," said the Marquis; "for my part, I have that regard for you, that I should be sorry the thing went on. This Sir William Ashton was a pretty enough pettifogging kind of a lawyer twenty years ago, and betwixt battling at the bar and leading in committees of Parliament he has got well on; the Darien matter lent him a lift, for he had good intelligence and sound views, and sold out in time; but the best work is had out of him. No government will take him at his own, or rather his wife's extravagant, valuation; and betwixt his indecision and her insolence, from all I can guess, he will outsit his market, and be had cheap when no one will bid for him. I say nothing of Miss Ashton; but I assure you, a connection with her father will be neither useful nor ornamental, beyond that part of your father's spoils which he may be prevailed upon to disgorge by way of tocher-good; and take my word for it, you will get more if you have spirit to bell the cat with him in the House of Peers. And I will be the man, cousin," continued his lordship, "will course the fox for you, and make him rue the day that ever he refused a composition too honorable for him, and proposed by me on the behalf of a kinsman."

There was something in all this that, as it were, overshot the mark. Ravenswood could not disguise from himself that his noble kinsman had more reasons for taking offence at the reception of his suit than regarded his interest and honor, yet he could neither complain nor be surprised that it should be so. He contented himself, therefore, with repeating that his attachment was to Miss Ashton personally; that he desired neither wealth nor aggrandizement from her father's means and influence; and that nothing should prevent his keeping his engagement, excepting her own express desire that it should be relinquished; and he requested as a favor that the matter might be no more mentioned betwixt them at present, assuring the Marquis of A—— that he should be his confidant in its progress or its interruption.

The Marquis soon had more agreeable, as well as more interesting, subjects on which to converse. A foot-post, who had followed him from Edinburgh to Ravenswood Castle, and had traced his steps to the Tod's Hole, brought him a packet laden with good news. The political calculations of the Marquis had proved just, both in London and at Edinburgh, and he saw almost within his grasp the pre-eminence for which he had panted. The refreshments which the servants had prepared were now put on the table, and an epicure would perhaps have enjoyed them with additional zest from the contrast which such fare afforded to the miserable cabin in which it was served up.

The turn of conversation corresponded with and added to the social feelings of the company. The Marquis expanded with pleasure on the power which probable incidents were likely to assign to him, and on the use which he hoped to make of it in serving his kinsman Ravenswood. Ravenswood could but repeat the gratitude which he really felt, even when he considered the topic as too long dwelt upon. The wine was excellent, notwithstanding its having been brought in a runlet from Edinburgh; and the habits of the Marquis, when engaged with such good cheer, were somewhat sedentary. And so it fell out that they delayed their journey two hours later than was their original purpose.

"But what of that, my good young friend?" said the Marquis. "Your Castle of Wolf's Crag is but at five or six miles' distance, and will afford the same hospitality to your kinsman of A—— that it gave to this same Sir William Ashton."

"Sir William took the castle by storm," said Ravenswood, "and, like many a victor, had little reason to congratulate himself on his conquest."

"Well—well!" said Lord A——, whose dignity was something relaxed by the wine he had drunk, "I see I must bribe you to harbor me. Come, pledge me in a bumper health to the last young lady that slept at Wolf's Crag, and liked her quarters. My bones are not so tender as hers, and I am resolved to occupy her apartment to-night, that I may judge how hard the couch is that love can soften."

"Your lordship may choose what penance you please," said Ravenswood; "but I assure you, I should expect my old servant to hang himself, or throw himself from the battlements, should your lordship visit him so unexpectedly. I do assure you, we are totally and literally unprovided."

But his declaration only brought from his noble patron an assurance of his own total indifference as to every species of accommodation, and his determination to see the Tower of Wolf's Crag. His ancestor, he said, had been feasted there, when he went forward with the then Lord Ravenswood to the fatal battle of Flodden, in which they both fell. Thus hard pressed, the Master offered to ride forward to get matters put in such preparation as time and circumstances admitted; but the Marquis protested his kinsman must afford him his company, and would only consent that an avant-courier should carry to the destined seneschal, Caleb Balderstone, the unexpected news of this invasion.

The Master of Ravenswood soon after accompanied the Marquis in his carriage, as the latter had proposed; and when they became better acquainted in the progress of the journey, his noble relation explained the very liberal views which he entertained for his relation's preferment, in case of the success of his own political schemes. They related to a secret and highly important commission beyond sea, which could only be intrusted to a person of rank, talent, and perfect confidence, and which, as it required great trust and reliance on the envoy employed, could not but prove both honorable and advantageous to him. We need not enter into the nature and purpose of this commission, farther than to acquaint our readers that the charge was in prospect highly acceptable to the Master of Ravenswood, who hailed with pleasure the hope of emerging from his present state of indigence and inaction into independence and honorable exertion.

While he listened thus eagerly to the details with which the Marquis now thought it necessary to intrust him, the messenger who had been dispatched to the Tower of Wolf's Crag returned with Caleb Balderstone's humble duty, and an assurance that "a' should be in seemly order, sic as the

hurry of time permitted, to receive their lordships as it behoved."

Ravenswood was too well accustomed to his seneschal's mode of acting and speaking to hope much from this confident assurance. He knew that Caleb acted upon the principle of the Spanish generals, in the campaign of ——, who, much to the perplexity of the Prince of Orange, their commander-in-chief, used to report their troops as full in number, and possessed of all necessary points of equipment, not considering it consistent with their dignity, or the honor of Spain, to confess any deficiency either in men or munition, until the want of both was unavoidably discovered in the day of battle. Accordingly, Ravenswood thought it necessary to give the Marquis some hint that the fair assurance which they had just received from Caleb did not by any means insure them against a very indifferent reception.

"You do yourself injustice, Master," said the Marquis, "or you wish to surprise me agreeably. From this window I see a great light in the direction where, if I remember aright, Wolf's Crag lies; and, to judge from the splendor which the old Tower sheds around it, the preparations for our reception must be of no ordinary description. I remember your father putting the same deception on me, when we went to the Tower for a few days' hawking, about twenty years since, and yet we spent our time as jollily at Wolf's Crag as we could have done at my own hunting seat at B——."

"Your lordship, I fear, will experience that the faculty of the present proprietor to entertain his friends is greatly abridged," said Ravenswood; "the will, I need hardly say, remains the same. But I am as much at a loss as your lordship to account for so strong and brilliant a light as is now above Wolf's Crag; the windows of the Tower are few and narrow, and those of the lower story are hidden from us by the walls of the court. I cannot conceive that any illumination of an ordinary nature could afford such a blaze of light."

The mystery was soon explained; for the cavalcade almost instantly halted, and the voice of Caleb Balderstone was heard at the coach window, exclaiming, in accents broken by grief and fear, "Och, gentlemen! Och, my gude lords! Och, haud to the right! Wolf's Crag is burning, bower and ha'—a' the rich plenishing outside and inside—a' the fine graith, pictures, tapestries, needle-wark, hangings, and other decorements—a' in a bleeze, as if they were nae mair than sae mony peats, or as muckle pea-strae! Haud to the right,

gentlemen, I implore ye; there is some sma' provision making at Luckie Sma' trash's; but O, wae for this night, and wae for me that lives to see it!"

Ravenswood was at first stunned by this new and unexpected calamity; but after a moment's recollection he sprang from the carriage, and hastily bidding his noble kinsman good-night, was about to ascend the hill towards the castle, the broad and full conflagration of which now flung forth a high column of red light, that flickered far to seaward upon the dashing waves of the ocean.

"Take a horse, Master," exlaimed the Marquis, greatly affected by this additional misfortune, so unexpectedly heaped upon his young *protégé;* "and give me my ambling palfrey; and haste forward, you knaves, to see what can be done to save the furniture, or to extinguish the fire—ride, you knaves, for your lives!"

The attendants bustled together, and began to strike their horses with the spur, and call upon Caleb to show them the road. But the voice of that careful seneschal was heard above the tumult, "O, stop—sirs, stop—turn bridle, for the luve of Mercy; add not loss of lives to the loss of warld's gear! Thirty barrels of powther, landed out of a Dunkirk dogger in the auld lord's time—a' in the vau'ts of the auld tower,—the fire canna be far aff it, I trow. Lord's sake, to the right, lads—to the right; let's pit the hill atween us and peril,—a wap wi' a corner-stane o' Wolf's Crag wad defy the doctor!"

It will readily be supposed that this annunciation hurried the Marquis and his attendants into the route which Caleb prescribed, dragging Ravenswood along with them, although there was much in the matter which he could not possibly comprehend. "Gunpowder!" he exclaimed, laying hold of Caleb, who in vain endeavored to escape from him, "what gunpowder? How any quantity of powder could be in Wolf's Crag without my knowledge, I cannot possibly comprehend."

"But I can," interrupted the Marquis, whispering him. "I can comprehend it thoroughly; for God's sake, ask him no more questions at present."

"There it is, now," said Caleb, extricating himself from his master, and adjusting his dress, "your honor will believe his lordship's honorable testimony. His lordship minds weel how, in the year that him they ca'd King Willie died——"

"Hush! hush, my good friend!" said the Marquis; "I shall satisfy your master upon that subject."

"And the people at Wolf's Hope," said Ravenswood, "did none of them come to your assistance before the flame got so high?"

"Ay did they, mony ane of them, the rapscallions!" said Caleb; "but truly I was in nae hurry to let them into the Tower, where there were so much plate and valuables."

"Confound you for an impudent liar!" said Ravenswood, in uncontrollable ire, "there was not a single ounce of——"

"Forbye," said the butler, most irreverently raising his voice to a pitch which drowned his master's, "the fire made fast on us, owing to the store of tapestry and carved timmer in the banqueting-ha', and the loons ran like scauded rats sae sune as they heard of the gunpouther."

"I do entreat," said the Marquis to Ravenswood, "you will ask him no more questions."

"Only one, my lord. What has become of poor Mysie?"

"Mysie!" said Caleb, "I had nae time to look about ony Mysie; she's in the Tower, I'se warrant, biding her awful doom."

"By heaven," said Ravenswood, "I do not understand all this! The life of a faithful old creature is at stake; my lord, I will be withheld no longer; I will at least ride up, and see whether the danger is as imminent as this old fool pretends."

"Weel, then, as I live by bread," said Caleb, "Mysie is weel and safe. I saw her out of the castle before I left it mysell. Was I ganging to forget an auld fellow-servant?"

"What made you tell me the contrary this moment?" said his master.

"Did I tell you the contrary?" said Caleb; "then I maun hae been dreaming surely, or this awsome night has turned my judgment; but safe she is, and ne'er a living soul in the castle, a' the better for them: they wad have gotten an unco heezy."

The Master of Ravenswood, upon this assurance being solemnly reiterated, and notwithstanding his extreme wish to witness the last explosion, which was to ruin to the ground the mansion of his fathers, suffered himself to be dragged onward towards the village of Wolf's Hope, where not only the change-house, but that of our well-known friend the cooper, were all prepared for reception of himself and his noble guest, with a liberality of provision which requires some explanation.

We omitted to mention in its place, that Lockhard having fished out the truth concerning the mode by which Caleb

had obtained the supplies for his banquet, the Lord Keeper, amused with the incident, and desirous at the time to gratify Ravenswood, had recommended the cooper of Wolf's Hope to the official situation under government, the prospect of which had reconciled him to the loss of his wild-fowl. Mr. Girder's preferment had occasioned a pleasing surprise to old Caleb; for when, some days after his master's departure, he found himself absolutely compelled, by some necessary business, to visit the fishing hamlet, and was gliding like a ghost past the door of the cooper, for fear of being summoned to give some account of the progress of the solicitation in his favor, or, more probably, that the inmates might upbraid him with the false hope he had held out upon the subject, he heard himself, not without some apprehension, summoned at once in treble, tenor, and bass—a trio performed by the voices of Mrs. Girder, old Dame Loup-the-Dyke, and the goodman of the dwelling—"Mr. Caleb!—Mr. Caleb!—Mr. Caleb Balderstone! I hope ye arena ganging dry-lipped by our door, and we sae muckle indebted to you?"

This might be said ironically as well as in earnest. Caleb augured the worst, turned a deaf ear to the trio aforesaid, and was moving doggedly on, his ancient castor pulled over his brows, and his eyes bent on the ground, as if to count the flinty pebbles with which the rude pathway was causewayed. But on a sudden he found himself surrounded in his progress, like a stately merchantman in the Gut of Gibraltar (I hope the ladies will excuse the tarpaulin phrase) by three Algerine galleys.

"Gude guide us, Mr. Balderstone!" said Mrs. Girder.

"Wha wad hae thought it of an auld and kenned friend!" said the mother.

"And no sae muckle as stay to receive our thanks," said the cooper himself, "and frae the like o' me that seldom offers them! I am sure I hope there's nae ill seed sawn between us, Mr. Balderstone. Ony man that has said to ye I am no gratefu' for the situation of Queen's cooper, let me hae a whample at him wi' mine eatche, that's a'."

"My good friends—my dear friends," said Caleb, still doubting how the certainty of the matter might stand, "what needs a' this ceremony? Ane tries to serve their friends, and sometimes they may happen to prosper, and sometimes to misgie. Naething I care to be fashed wi' less than thanks; I never could bide them."

"Faith, Mr. Balderstone, ye suld hae been fashed wi' few o' mine," said the downright man of staves and hoops, "if

I had only your gude-will to thank ye for: I suld e'en hae set the guse, and the wild deukes, and the runlet of sack to balance that account. Gude-will, man, is a geizened tub, that hauds in nae liquor; but gude deed's like the cask, tight, round, and sound, that will haud liquor for the king."

"Have ye no heard of our letter," said the mother-in-law, "making our John [Gibbie] the Queen's cooper for certain? and scarce a chield that had ever hammered gird upon tub but was applying for it?"

"Have I heard! ! !" said Caleb, who now found how the wind set, with an accent of exceeding contempt at the doubt expressed—"have I heard, quoth she! ! !" and as he spoke he changed his shambling, skulking, dodging pace into a manly and authoritative step, readjusted his cocked hat, and suffered his brow to emerge from under it in all the pride of aristocracy, like the sun from behind a cloud.

"To be sure, he canna but hae heard," said the good woman.

"Ay, to be sure, it's impossible but I should," said Caleb; "and sae I'll be the first to kiss ye, joe, and wish you, cooper, much joy of your preferment, naething doubting but ye ken wha are your friends, and *have* helped ye, and *can* help ye. I thought it right to look a wee strange upon it at first," added Caleb, "just to see if ye were made of the right mettle; but ye ring true, lad—ye ring true!"

So saying, with a most lordly air he kissed the women, and abandoned his hand, with an air of serene patronage, to the hearty shake of Mr. Girder's horn-hard palm. Upon this complete, and to Caleb most satisfactory, information he did not, it may readily be believed, hesitate to accept an invitation to a solemn feast, to which were invited, not only all the *notables* of the village, but even his ancient antagonist, Mr. Dingwall, himself. At this festivity he was, of course, the most welcome and most honored guest; and so well did he ply the company with stories of what he could do with his master, his master with the Lord Keeper, the Lord Keeper with the council, and the council with the king [queen], that before the company dismissed (which was, indeed, rather at an early hour than a late one), every man of note in the village was ascending to the top-gallant of some ideal preferment by the ladder of ropes which Caleb had presented to their imagination. Nay, the cunning butler regained in that moment not only all the influence he possessed formerly over the villagers, when the baronial family which he served were at the proudest, but acquired even an accession of importance. The

writer—the very attorney himself, such is the thirst of preferment—felt the force of the attraction, and taking an opportunity to draw Caleb into a corner, spoke, with affectionate regret, of the declining health of the sheriff-clerk of the county.

"An excellent man—a most valuable man, Mr. Caleb; but fat sall I say! we are peer feckless bodies, here the day and awa' by cock-screech the morn; and if he failyies, there maun be somebody in his place; and gif that ye could airt it my way, I sall be thankful, man—a gluve stuffed wi' gowd nobles; an' hark ye, man, something canny till yoursell, and the Wolf's Hope carles to settle kindly wi' the Master of Ravenswood—that is, Lord Ravenswood—God bless his lordship!"

A smile, and a hearty squeeze by the hand, was the suitable answer to this overture; and Caleb made his escape from the jovial party, in order to avoid committing himself by any special promises.

"The Lord be gude to me," said Caleb, when he found himself in the open air, and at liberty to give vent to the self-exultation with which he was, as it were, distended; "did ever ony man see sic a set of green-gaislings? The very pick-maws and solan-geese out-bye yonder at the Bass hae ten times their sense! God, an I had been the Lord High Commissioner to the Estates o' Parliament, they couldna hae beflummed me mair; and, to speak Heaven's truth, I could hardly hae beflummed them better neither! But the writer—ha! ha! ha!—ah, ha! ha! ha! mercy on me, that I suld live in my auld days to gie the gang-bye to the very writer! Sheriff-clerk!!! But I hae an auld account to settle wi' the carle; and to make amends for bye-ganes, the office shall just cost him as much time-serving and tide-serving as if he were to get it in gude earnest, of whilk there is sma' appearance, unless the Master learns mair the ways of this warld, whilk it is muckle to be doubted that he never will do."

CHAPTER XXVI

Why flames yon far summit—why shoot to the blast
Those embers, like stars from the firmament cast?
'Tis the fire-shower of ruin, all dreadfully driven
From thine eyrie, that beacons the darkness of Heaven.

CAMPBELL.

THE circumstances announced in the conclusion of the last chapter will account for the ready and cheerful reception of the Marquis of A—— and the Master of Ravenswood in the village of Wolf's Hope. In fact, Caleb had no sooner announced the conflagration of the tower than the whole hamlet were upon foot to hasten to extinguish the flames. And although that zealous adherent diverted their zeal by intimating the formidable contents of the subterranean apartments, yet the check only turned their assiduity into another direction. Never had there been such slaughtering of capons, and fat geese, and barn-door fowls; never such boiling of "reested" hams; never such making of car-cakes and sweet scones, Selkirk bannocks, cookies, and petticoat-tails—delicacies little known to the present generation. Never had there been such a tapping of barrels, and such uncorking of graybeards, in the village of Wolf's Hope. All the inferior houses were thrown open for the reception of the Marquis's dependants, who came, it was thought, as precursors of the shower of preferment which hereafter was to leave the rest of Scotland dry, in order to distil its rich dews on the village of Wolf's Hope under Lammermoor. The minister put in his claim to have the guests of distinction lodged at the manse, having his eye, it was thought, upon a neighboring preferment, where the incumbent was sickly; but Mr. Balderstone destined that honor to the cooper, his wife, and wife's mother, who danced for joy at the preference thus assigned them.

Many a beck and many a bow welcomed these noble guests to as good entertainment as persons of such rank could set before such visitors; and the old dame, who had formerly lived in Ravenswood Castle, and knew, as she said, the ways

of the nobility, was in no whit wanting in arranging matters, as well as circumstances permitted, according to the etiquette of the times. The cooper's house was so roomy that each guest had his separate retiring-room, to which they were ushered with all due ceremony, while the plentiful supper was in the act of being placed upon the table.

Ravenswood no sooner found himself alone than, impelled by a thousand feelings, he left the apartment, the house, and the village, and hastily retraced his steps to the brow of the hill, which rose betwixt the village and screened it from the tower, in order to view the final fall of the house of his fathers. Some idle boys from the hamlet had taken the same direction out of curiosity, having first witnessed the arrival of the coach and six and its attendants. As they ran one by one past the Master, calling to each other to "Come and see the auld tower blaw up in the lift like the peelings of an ingan," he could not but feel himself moved with indignation. "And these are the sons of my father's vassals," he said—"of men bound, both by law and gratitude, to follow our steps through battle, and fire, and flood; and now the destruction of their liege lord's house is but a holiday's sight to them!"

These exasperating reflections were partly expressed in the acrimony with which he exclaimed, on feeling himself pulled by the cloak—"What do you want, you dog?"

"I am a dog, and an auld dog too," answered Caleb, for it was he who had taken the freedom, "and I am like to get a dog's wages; but it does not signification a pinch of sneeshing, for I am ower auld a dog to learn new tricks, or to follow a new master."

As he spoke, Ravenswood attained the ridge of the hill from which Wolf's Crag was visible; the flames had entirely sunk down, and, to his great surprise, there was only a dusky reddening upon the clouds immediately over the castle, which seemed the reflection of the embers of the sunken fire.

"The place cannot have blown up," said the Master; "we must have heard the report: if a quarter of the gunpowder was there you tell me of, it would have been heard twenty miles off."

"It's very like it wad," said Balderstone, composedly.

"Then the fire cannot have reached the vaults?"

"It's like no," answered Caleb, with the same impenetrable gravity.

"Hark ye, Caleb," said his master, "this grows a little too much for my patience. I must go and examine how matters stand at Wolf's Crag myself."

"Your honor is ganging to gang nae sic gate," said Caleb, firmly.

"And why not?" said Ravenswood, sharply; "who or what shall prevent me?"

"Even I mysell," said Caleb, with the same determination.

"You, Balderstone!" replied the Master; "you are forgetting yourself, I think."

"But I think no," said Balderstone; "for I can just tell ye a' about the castle on this knowe-head as weel as if ye were at it. Only dinna pit yoursell into a kippage, and expose yoursell before the weans, or before the Marquis, when ye gang down-bye."

"Speak out, you old fool," replied his master, "and let me know the best and the worst at once."

"Ou, the best and the warst is, just that the tower is standing haill and feir, as safe and as empty as when ye left it."

"Indeed! and the fire?" said Ravenswood.

"Not a gleed of fire, then, except the bit kindling peat, and maybe a spunk in Mysie's cutty-pipe," replied Caleb.

"But the flame?" demanded Ravenswood—"the broad blaze which might have been seen ten miles off—what occasioned that?"

"Hout awa'! it's an auld saying and a true—

"'Little's the light
Will be seen far in a mirk night.'

A wheen fern and horse litter that I fired in the courtyard, after sending back the loon of a footman; and, to speak Heaven's truth, the next time that ye send or bring onybody here, let them be gentles allenarly, without ony fremd servants, like that chield Lockhard, to be gledging and gleeing about, and looking upon the wrang side of ane's housekeeping, to the discredit of the family, and forcing ane to damn their souls wi' telling ae lee after another faster than I can count them: I wad rather set fire to the tower in gude earnest, and burn it ower my ain head into the bargain, or I see the family dishonored in the sort."

"Upon my word. I am infinitely obliged by the proposal, Caleb," said his master, scarce able to restrain his laughter, though rather angry at the same time. "But the gunpowder—is there such a thing in the tower? The Marquis seemed to know of it."

"The pouther, ha! ha! ha!—the Marquis, ha! ha! ha!"

replied Caleb,—"if your honor were to brain me, I behooved to laugh,—the Marquis—the pouther! Was it there? Ay, it was there. Did he ken o't? My certie! the Marquis kenned o't, and it was the best o' the game; for, when I couldna pacify your honor wi' a' that I could say, I aye threw out a word mair about the gunpouther, and garred the Marquis tak the job in his ain hand."

"But you have not answered my question," said the Master, impatiently; "how came the powder there, and where is it now?"

"Ou, it came there, an ye maun needs ken," said Caleb, looking mysteriously, and whispering, "when there was like to be a wee bit rising here; and the Marquis, and a' the great lords of the north, were a' in it, and mony a gudely gun and broadsword were ferried ower frae Dunkirk forbye the pouther. Awfu' wark we had getting them into the tower under cloud o' night, for ye maun think it wasna everybody could be trusted wi' sic kittle jobs. But if ye will gae hame to your supper, I will tell you a' about it as ye gang down."

"And these wretched boys," said Ravenswood, "is it your pleasure they are to sit there all night, to wait for the blowing up of a tower that is not even on fire?"

"Surely not, if it is your honor's pleasure that they suld gang hame; although," added Caleb, "it wadna do them a grain's damage: they wad screigh less the next day, and sleep the sounder at e'en. But just as your honor likes."

Stepping accordingly towards the urchins who manned the knolls near which they stood, Caleb informed them, in an authoritative tone, that their honors Lord Ravenswood and the Marquis of A—— had given orders that the tower was not to blow up till next day at noon. The boys dispersed upon this comfortable assurance. One or two, however, followed Caleb for more information, particularly the urchin whom he had cheated while officiating as turnspit, who screamed, "Mr. Balderstone!—Mr. Balderstone! then the castle's gane out like an auld wife's spunk?"

"To be sure it is, callant," said the butler; "do ye think the castle of as great a lord as Lord Ravenswood wad continue in a bleeze, and him standing looking on wi' his ain very een? It's aye right," continued Caleb, shaking off his ragged page, and closing in to his master, "to train up weans, as the wise man says, in the way they should go, and, aboon a', to teach them respect to their superiors."

"But all this while, Caleb, you have never told me what became of the arms and powder," said Ravenswood.

"Why, as for the arms," said Caleb, "it was just like the bairns' rhyme—

"'Some gaed east and some gaed west,
And some gaed to the craw's nest.'

And for the pouther, I e'en changed it, as occasion served, with the skippers o' Dutch luggers and French vessels, for gin and brandy, and it served the house mony a year—a gude swap too, between what cheereth the soul of man and that which dingeth it clean out of his body; forbye, I keepit a wheen pounds of it for yoursell when ye wanted to take the pleasure o' shooting: whiles, in these latter days, I wad hardly hae kenned else whar to get pouther for your pleasure. And now that your anger is ower, sir, wasna that weel managed o' me, and arena ye far better sorted doun yonder than ye could hae been in your ain auld ruins up-bye yonder, as the case stands wi' us now? the mair's the pity!"

"I believe you may be right, Caleb; but, before burning down my castle, either in jest or in earnest," said Ravenswood, "I think I had a right to be in the secret."

"Fie for shame, your honor!" replied Caleb; "it fits an auld carle like me weel eneugh to tell lees for the credit of the family, but it wadna beseem the like o' your honor's sell; besides, young folk are no judicious: they cannot make the maist of a bit figment. Now this fire—for a fire it sall be, if I suld burn the auld stable to make it mair feasible—this fire, besides that it will be an excuse for asking onything we want through the country, or doun at the haven—this fire will settle mony things on an honorable footing for the family's credit, that cost me telling twenty daily lees to a wheen idle chaps and queens, and, what's waur, without gaining credence."

"That was hard indeed, Caleb; but I do not see how this fire should help your veracity or your credit."

"There it is now!" said Caleb; "wasna I saying that young folk had a green judgment? How suld it help me, quotha? It will be a creditable apology for the honor of the family for this score of years to come, if it is weel guided. 'Where's the family pictures?' says ae meddling body. 'The great fire at Wolf's Crag,' answers I. 'Where's the family plate?' says another. 'The great fire,' says I; 'wha was to think of plate, when life and limb were in danger?' 'Where's the wardrobe and the linens?—where's the tapestries and the decorements?—beds of state, twilts, pands and testors, napery and broidered wark?' 'The fire—the

fire—the fire.' Guide the fire weel, and it will serve ye for a' that ye suld have and have not; and, in some sort, a gude excuse is better than the things themselves; for they maun crack and wear out, and be consumed by time, whereas a gude offcome, prudently and creditably handled, may serve a nobleman and his family, Lord kens how lang!"

Ravenswood was too well acquainted with his butler's pertinacity and self-opinion to dispute the point with him any farther. Leaving Caleb, therefore, to the enjoyment of his own successful ingenuity, he returned to the hamlet, where he found the Marquis and the good women of the mansion under some anxiety—the former on account of his absence, the others for the discredit their cookery might sustain by the delay of the supper. All were now at ease, and heard with pleasure that the fire at the castle had burned out of itself without reaching the vaults, which was the only information that Ravenswood thought it proper to give in public concerning the event of his butler's stratagem.

They sat down to an excellent supper. No invitation could prevail on Mr. and Mrs. Girder, even in their own house, to sit down at table with guests of such high quality. They remained standing in the apartment, and acted the part of respectful and careful attendants on the company. Such were the manners of the time. The elder dame, confident through her age and connection with the Ravenswood family, was less scrupulously ceremonious. She played a mixed part betwixt that of the hostess of an inn and the mistress of a private house, who receives guests above her own degree. She recommended, and even pressed, what she thought best, and was herself easily entreated to take a moderate share of the good cheer, in order to encourage her guests by her own example. Often she interrupted herself, to express her regret that "my lord did not eat; that the Master was pyking a bare bane; that, to be sure, there was naething there fit to set before their honors; that Lord Allan, rest his saul, used to like a pouthered guse, and said it was Latin for a tass o' brandy; that the brandy came frae France direct; for, for a' the English laws and gaugers, the Wolf's Hope brigs hadna forgotten the gate to Dunkirk."

Here the cooper admonished his mother-in-law with his elbow, which procured him the following special notice in the progress of her speech:

"Ye needna be dunshin that gate, John [Gibbie]," continued the old lady; "naebody says that *ye* ken whar the brandy comes frae; and it wadna be fitting ye should, and you

the Queen's cooper; and what signifies't," continued she, addressing Lord Ravenswood, "to king, queen, or kaiser whar an auld wife like me buys her pickle sneeshin, or her drap brandy-wine, to haud her heart up?"

Having thus extricated herself from her supposed false step, Dame Loup-the-Dyke proceeded, during the rest of the evening, to supply, with great animation, and very little assistance from her guests, the funds necessary for the support of the conversation, until, declining any farther circulation of their glass, her guests requested her permission to retire to their apartments.

The Marquis occupied the chamber of dais, which, in every house above the rank of a mere cottage, was kept sacred for such high occasions as the present. The modern finishing with plaster was then unknown, and tapestry was confined to the houses of the nobility and superior gentry. The cooper, therefore, who was a man of some vanity, as well as some wealth, had imitated the fashion observed by the inferior landholders and clergy, who usually ornamented their state apartments with hangings of a sort of stamped leather, manufactured in the Netherlands, garnished with trees and animals executed in copper foil, and with many a pithy sentence of morality, which, although couched in Low Dutch, were perhaps as much attended to in practice as if written in broad Scotch. The whole had somewhat of a gloomy aspect; but the fire, composed of old pitch-barrel staves, blazed merrily up the chimney; the bed was decorated with linen of most fresh and dazzling whiteness, which had never before been used, and might, perhaps, have never been used at all, but for this high occasion. On the toilette beside, stood an old-fashioned mirror, in a fillagree frame, part of the dispersed finery of the neighboring castle. It was flanked by a long-necked bottle of Florence wine, by which stood a glass nearly as tall, resembling in shape that which Teniers usually places in the hands of his own portrait, when he paints himself as mingling in the revels of a country village. To counterbalance those foreign sentinels, there mounted guard on the other side of the mirror two stout warders of Scottish lineage; a jug, namely, of double ale, which held a Scotch pint, and a quaigh, or bicker, of ivory and ebony, hooped with silver, the work of John Girder's own hands, and the pride of his heart. Besides these preparations against thirst, there was a goodly diet-loaf, or sweet cake; so that, with such auxiliaries, the apartment seemed victualled against a siege of two or three days.

It only remains to say, that the Marquis's valet was in attendance, displaying his master's brocaded nightgown, and richly embroidered velvet cap, lined and faced with Brussels lace, upon a huge leathern easy-chair, wheeled round so as to have the full advantage of the comfortable fire which we have already mentioned. We therefore commit that eminent person to his night's repose, trusting he profited by the ample preparations made for his accommodation—preparations which we have mentioned in detail, as illustrative of ancient Scottish manners.

It is not necessary we should be equally minute in describing the sleeping apartment of the Master of Ravenswood, which was that usually occupied by the goodman and goodwife themselves. It was comfortably hung with a sort of warm-colored worsted, manufactured in Scotland, approaching in texture to what is now called shalloon. A staring picture of John [Gibbie] Girder himself ornamented this dormitory, painted by a starving Frenchman, who had, God knows how or why, strolled over from Flushing or Dunkirk to Wolf's Hope in a smuggling dogger. The features were, indeed, those of the stubborn, opinionative, yet sensible artisan, but Monsieur had contrived to throw a French grace into the look and manner, so utterly inconsistent with the dogged gravity of the original, that it was impossible to look at it without laughing. John and his family, however, piqued themselves not a little upon this picture, and were proportionably censured by the neighborhood, who pronounced that the cooper, in sitting for the same, and yet more in presuming to hang it up in his bedchamber, had exceeded his privilege as the richest man of the village; at once stepped beyond the bounds of his own rank, and encroached upon those of the superior orders; and, in fine, had been guilty of a very overweening act of vanity and presumption. Respect for the memory of my deceased friend, Mr. Richard Tinto, has obliged me to treat this matter at some length; but I spare the reader his prolix though curious observations, as well upon the character of the French school as upon the state of painting in Scotland at the beginning of the 18th century.

The other preparations of the Master's sleeping apartment were similar to those in the chamber of dais.

At the usual early hour of that period, the Marquis of A—— and his kinsman prepared to resume their journey. This could not be done without an ample breakfast, in which cold meat and hot meat, and oatmeal flummery, wine and spirits, and milk varied by every possible mode of preparation,

evinced the same desire to do honor to their guests which had been shown by the hospitable owners of the mansion upon the evening before. All the bustle of preparation for departure now resounded through Wolf's Hope. There was paying of bills and shaking of hands, and saddling of horses, and harnessing of carriages, and distributing of drink-money. The Marquis left a broad piece for the gratification of John Girder's household, which he, the said John, was for some time disposed to convert to his own use; Dingwall, the writer, assuring him he was justified in so doing, seeing he was the disburser of those expenses which were the occasion of the gratification. But, notwithstanding this legal authority, John could not find in his heart to dim the splendor of his late hospitality by pocketing anything in the nature of a gratuity. He only assured his menials he would consider them as a damned ungrateful pack if they bought a gill of brandy elsewhere than out of his own stores; and as the drink-money was likely to go to its legitimate use, he comforted himself that, in this manner, the Marquis's donative would, without any impeachment of credit and character, come ultimately into his own exclusive possession.

While arrangements were making for departure, Ravenswood made blithe the heart of his ancient butler by informing him, cautiously however (for he knew Caleb's warmth of imagination), of the probable change which was about to take place in his fortunes. He deposited with Balderstone, at the same time, the greater part of his slender funds, with an assurance, which he was obliged to reiterate more than once, that he himself had sufficient supplies in certain prospect. He therefore enjoined Caleb, as he valued his favor, to desist from all farther manœuvres against the inhabitants of Wolf's Hope, their cellars, poultry-yards, and substance whatsoever. In this prohibition, the old domestic acquiesced more readily than his master expected.

"It was doubtless," he said, "a shame, a discredit, and a sin to harry the puir creatures, when the family were in circumstances to live honorably on their ain means; and there might be wisdom," he added, "in giving them a while's breathing-time at any rate, that they might be the more readily brought forward upon his honor's future occasions."

This matter being settled, and having taken an affectionate farewell of his old domestic, the Master rejoined his noble relative, who was now ready to enter his carriage. The two landladies, old and young, having received in all kindly greeting a kiss from each of their noble guests, stood simper-

ing at the door of their house, as the coach and six, followed by its train of clattering horsemen, thundered out of the village. John Girder also stood upon his threshold, now looking at his honored right hand, which had been so lately shaken by a marquis and a lord, and now giving a glance into the interior of his mansion, which manifested all the disarray of the late revel, as if balancing the distinction which he had attained with the expenses of the entertainment.

At length he opened his oracular jaws. "Let every man and woman here set about their ain business, as if there was nae sic thing as marquis or master, duke or drake, laird or lord, in this world. Let the house be redd up, the broken meat set by, and if there is onything totally uneatable, let it be gien to the puir folk; and, gudemother and wife, I hae just ae thing to entreat ye, that ye will never speak to me a single word, good or bad, anent a' this nonsense wark, but keep a' your cracks about it to yoursells and your kimmers, for my head is weel-nigh dung donnart wi' it already."

As John's authority was tolerably absolute, all departed to their usual occupations, leaving him to build castles in the air, if he had a mind, upon the court favor which he had acquired by the expenditure of his worldly substance.

CHAPTER XXVII

Why, now I have Dame Fortune by the forelock,
And if she escapes my grasp, the fault is mine;
He that hath buffeted with stern adversity
Best knows to shape his course to favoring breezes.

Old Play.

OUR travellers reached Edinburgh without any farther adventure, and the Master of Ravenswood, as had been previously settled, took up his abode with his noble friend.

In the mean time, the political crisis which had been expected took place, and the Tory party obtained in the Scottish, as in the English, councils of Queen Anne a short-lived ascendency, of which it is not our business to trace either the cause or consequences. Suffice it to say, that it affected the different political parties according to the nature of their principles. In England, many of the High Church party, with Harley, afterwards Earl of Oxford, at their head, affected to separate their principles from those of the Jacobites, and, on that account, obtained the denomination of Whimsicals. The Scottish High Church party, on the contrary, or, as they termed themselves, the Cavaliers, were more consistent, if not so prudent, in their politics, and viewed all the changes now made as preparatory to calling to the throne, upon the queen's demise, her brother, the Chevalier de St. George. Those who had suffered in his service now entertained the most unreasonable hopes, not only of indemnification, but of vengeance upon their political adversaries; while families attached to the Whig interest saw nothing before them but a renewal of the hardships they had undergone during the reigns of Charles the Second and his brother, and a retaliation of the confiscation which had been inflicted upon the Jacobites during that of King William.

But the most alarmed at the change of system was that prudential set of persons, some of whom are found in all governments, but who abound in a provisional administration like that of Scotland during the period, and who are what Cromwell called waiters upon Providence, or, in other words, uniform adherents to the party who are uppermost. Many of

these hastened to read their recantation to the Marquis of A——; and, as it was easily seen that he took a deep interest in the affairs of his kinsman, the Master of Ravenswood, they were the first to suggest measures for retrieving at least a part of his property, and for restoring him in blood against his father's attainder.

Old Lord Turntippet professed to be one of the most anxious for the success of these measures; for "it grieved him to the very saul," he said, "to see so brave a young gentleman, of sic auld and undoubted nobility, and, what was mair than a' that, a bluid relation of the Marquis of A——, the man whom," he swore, "he honored most upon the face of the yearth, brought to so severe a pass. For his ain puir peculiar," as he said, "and to contribute something to the rehabilitation of sae auld ane house," the said Turntippet sent in three family pictures lacking the frames, and six high-backed chairs, with worked Turkey cushions, having the crest of Ravenswood broidered thereon, without charging a penny either of the principal or interest they had cost him, when he bought them, sixteen years before, at a roup of the furniture of Lord Ravenswood's lodgings in the Canongate.

Much more to Lord Turntippet's dismay than to his surprise, although he affected to feel more of the latter than the former, the Marquis received his gift very dryly, and observed, that his lordship's restitution, if he expected it to be received by the Master of Ravenswood and his friends, must comprehend a pretty large farm, which, having been mortgaged to Turntippet for a very inadequate sum, he had contrived, during the confusion of the family affairs, and by means well understood by the lawyers of that period, to acquire to himself in absolute property.

The old time-serving lord winced excessively under this requisition, protesting to God, that he saw no occasion the lad could have for the instant possession of the land, seeing he would doubtless now recover the bulk of his estate from Sir William Ashton, to which he was ready to contribute by every means in his power, as was just and reasonable; and finally declaring, that he was willing to settle the land on the young gentleman after his own natural demise.

But all these excuses availed nothing, and he was compelled to disgorge the property, on receiving back the sum for which it had been mortgaged. Having no other means of making peace with the higher powers, he returned home sorrowful and malcontent, complaining to his confidants, "That every mutation or change in the estate had hitherto been pro-

ductive of some sma' advantage to him in his ain quiet affairs; but that the present had—pize upon it!—cost him one of the best pen-feathers o' his wing."

Similar measures were threatened against others who had profited by the wreck of the fortune of Ravenswood; and Sir William Ashton, in particular, was menaced with an appeal to the House of Peers, a court of equity, against the judicial sentences, proceeding upon a strict and severe construction of the letter of the law, under which he held the castle and barony of Ravenswood. With him, however, the Master, as well for Lucy's sake as on account of the hospitality he had received from him, felt himself under the necessity of proceeding with great candor. He wrote to the late Lord Keeper, for he no longer held that office, stating frankly the engagement which existed between him and Miss Ashton, requesting his permission for their union, and assuring him of his willingness to put the settlement of all matters between them upon such a footing as Sir William himself should think favorable.

The same messenger was charged with a letter to Lady Ashton, deprecating any cause of displeasure which the Master might unintentionally have given her, enlarging upon his attachment to Miss Ashton, and the length to which it had proceeded, and conjuring the lady, as a Douglas in nature as well as in name, generously to forget ancient prejudices and misunderstandings, and to believe that the family had acquired a friend, and she herself a respectful and attached humble servant, in him who subscribed himself "Edgar, Master of Ravenswood."

A third letter Ravenswood addressed to Lucy, and the messenger was instructed to find some secret and secure means of delivering it into her own hands. It contained the strongest protestations of continued affection, and dwelt upon the approaching change of the writer's fortunes, as chiefly valuable by tending to remove the impediments to their union. He related the steps he had taken to overcome the prejudices of her parents, and especially of her mother, and expressed his hope they might prove effectual. If not, he still trusted that his absence from Scotland upon an important and honorable mission might give time for prejudices to die away; while he hoped and trusted Miss Ashton's constancy, on which he had the most implicit reliance, would baffle any effort that might be used to divert her attachment. Much more there was, which, however interesting to the lovers themselves, would afford the reader neither interest

nor information. To each of these three letters the Master of Ravenswood received an answer, but by different means of conveyance, and certainly couched in very different styles.

Lady Ashton answered his letter by his own messenger, who was not allowed to remain at Ravenswood a moment longer than she was engaged in penning these lines. "For the hand of Mr. Ravenswood of Wolf's Crag—These·

"SIR, UNKNOWN,

"I have received a letter, signed 'Edgar, Master of Ravenswood,' concerning the writer whereof I am uncertain, seeing that the honors of such a family were forfeited for high treason in the person of Allan, late Lord Ravenswood. Sir, if you shall happen to be the person so subscribing yourself, you will please to know, that I claim the full interest of a parent in Miss Lucy Ashton, which I have disposed of irrevocably in behalf of a worthy person. And, sir, were this otherwise, I would not listen to a proposal from you, or any of your house, seeing their hand has been uniformly held up against the freedom of the subject and the immunities of God's kirk. Sir, it is not a flightering blink of prosperity which can change my constant opinion in this regard, seeing it has been my lot before now, like holy David, to see the wicked great in power and flourishing like a green bay-tree; nevertheless I passed, and they were not, and the place thereof knew them no more. Wishing you to lay these things to your heart for your own sake, so far as they may concern you, I pray you to take no farther notice of her who desires to remain your unknown servant,

"MARGARET DOUGLAS,
"otherwise ASHTON."

About two days after he had received this very unsatisfactory epistle, the Master of Ravenswood, while walking up the High Street of Edinburgh, was jostled by a person, in whom, as the man pulled off his hat to make an apology, he recognized Lockhard, the confidential domestic of Sir William Ashton. The man bowed, slipped a letter into his hand, and disappeared. The packet contained four close-written folios, from which, however, as is sometimes incident to the compositions of great lawyers, little could be extracted, excepting that the writer felt himself in a very puzzling predicament.

Sir William spoke at length of his high value and regard for his dear young friend, the Master of Ravenswood, and of

his very extreme high value and regard for the Marquis of A——, his very dear old friend; he trusted that any measures that they might adopt, in which he was concerned, would be carried on with due regard to the sanctity of decreets and judgments obtained *in foro contentioso;* protesting, before men and angels, that if the law of Scotland, as declared in her supreme courts, were to undergo a reversal in the English House of Lords, the evils which would thence arise to the public would inflict a greater wound upon his heart than any loss he might himself sustain by such irregular proceedings. He flourished much on generosity and forgiveness of mutual injuries, and hinted at the mutability of human affairs, always favorite topics with the weaker party in politics. He pathetically lamented, and gently censured, the haste which had been used in depriving him of his situation of Lord Keeper,* which his experience had enabled him to fill with some advantage to the public, without so much as giving him an opportunity of explaining how far his own views of general politics might essentially differ from those now in power. He was convinced the Marquis of A—— had as sincere intentions towards the public as himself or any man; and if, upon a conference, they could have agreed upon the measures by which it was to be pursued, his experience and his interest should have gone to support the present administration. Upon the engagement betwixt Ravenswood and his daughter, he spoke in a dry and confused manner. He regretted so premature a step as the engagement of the young people should have been taken, and conjured the Master to remember he had never given any encouragement thereunto; and observed that, as a transaction *inter minores,* and without concurrence of his daughter's natural curators, the engagement was inept, and void in law. This precipitate measure, he added, had produced a very bad effect upon Lady Ashton's mind, which it was impossible at present to remove. Her son, Colonel Douglas Ashton, had embraced her prejudices in the fullest extent, and it was impossible for Sir William to adopt a course disagreeable to them without a fatal and irreconcilable breach in his family; which was not at present to be thought of. Time, the great physician, he hoped, would mend all.

In a postscript, Sir William said something more explicitly, which seemed to intimate that, rather than the law of Scotland should sustain a severe wound through his sides, by

* This obviously cannot apply to Sir James Dalrymple. Lord Stair, who was then dead, and had never been deprived of any such office (*Laing*).

a reversal of the judgment of her supreme courts, in the case of the barony of Ravenswood, through the intervention of what, with all submission, he must term a foreign court of appeal, he himself would extrajudicially consent to considerable sacrifices.

From Lucy Ashton, by some unknown conveyance, the Master received the following lines: "I received yours, but it was at the utmost risk; do not attempt to write again till better times. I am sore beset, but I will be true to my word, while the exercise of my reason is vouchsafed to me. That you are happy and prosperous is some consolation, and my situation requires it all." The note was signed "L. A."

This letter filled Ravenswood with the most lively alarm. He made many attempts, notwithstanding her prohibition, to convey letters to Miss Ashton, and even to obtain an interview; but his plans were frustrated, and he had only the mortification to learn that anxious and effectual precautions had been taken to prevent the possibility of their correspondence. The Master was the more distressed by these circumstances, as it became impossible to delay his departure from Scotland, upon the important mission which had been confided to him. Before his departure, he put Sir William Ashton's letter into the hands of the Marquis of A——, who observed with a smile, that Sir William's day of grace was past, and that he had now to learn which side of the hedge the sun had got to. It was with the greatest difficulty that Ravenswood extorted from the Marquis a promise that he would compromise the proceedings in Parliament, providing Sir William should be disposed to acquiesce in a union between him and Lucy Ashton.

"I would hardly," said the Marquis, "consent to your throwing away your birthright in this manner, were I not perfectly confident that Lady Ashton, or Lady Douglas, or whatever she calls herself, will, as Scotchmen say, keep her threep; and that her husband dares not contradict her."

"But yet," said the Master, "I trust your lordship will consider my engagement as sacred."

"Believe my word of honor," said the Marquis, "I would be a friend even to your follies; and having thus told you *my* opinion, I will endeavor, as occasion offers, to serve you according to your own."

The Master of Ravenswood could but thank his generous kinsman and patron, and leave him full power to act in all his affairs. He departed from Scotland upon his mission, which, it was supposed, might detain him upon the continent for some months.

CHAPTER XXVIII

> Was ever woman in this humor wooed?
> Was ever woman in this humor won?
> I'll have her.
>
> *Richard III.*

TWELVE months had passed away since the Master of Ravenswood's departure for the continent, and, although his return to Scotland had been expected in a much shorter space, yet the affairs of his mission, or, according to a prevailing report, others of a nature personal to himself, still detained him abroad. In the mean time, the altered state of affairs in Sir William Ashton's family may be gathered from the following conversation which took place betwixt Bucklaw and his confidential bottle companion and dependant, the noted Captain Craigengelt.

They were seated on either side of the huge sepulchral-looking freestone chimney in the low hall at Girnington. A wood fire blazed merrily in the grate; a round oaken table, placed between them, supported a stoup of excellent claret, two rummer glasses, and other good cheer; and yet, with all these appliances and means to boot, the countenance of the patron was dubious, doubtful, and unsatisfied, while the invention of his dependant was taxed to the utmost to parry what he most dreaded, a fit, as he called it, of the sullens, on the part of his protector. After a long pause, only interrupted by the devil's tattoo, which Bucklaw kept beating against the hearth with the toe of his boot, Craigengelt at last ventured to break silence. "May I be double distanced," said he, "if ever I saw a man in my life have less the air of a bridegroom! Cut me out of feather, if you have not more the look of a man condemned to be hanged!"

"My kind thanks for the compliment," replied Bucklaw; "but I suppose you think upon the predicament in which you yourself are most likely to be placed; and pray, Captain Craigengelt, if it please your worship, why should I look merry, when I'm sad, and devilish sad too?"

"And that's what vexes me," said Craigengelt. "Here is this match, the best in the whole country, and which you

were so anxious about, is on the point of being concluded, and you are as sulky as a bear that has lost its whelps."

"I do not know," answered the Laird, doggedly, "whether I should conclude it or not, if it was not that I am too far forwards to leap back."

"Leap back!" exclaimed Craigenfelt, with a well-assumed air of astonishment, "that would be playing the back-game with a witness! Leap back! Why, is not the girl's fortune——"

"The young lady's, if you please," said Hayston, interrupting him.

"Well—well, no disrespect meant. Will Miss Ashton's tocher not weigh against any in Lothian?"

"Granted," answered Bucklaw; "but I care not a penny for her tocher; I have enough of my own."

"And the mother, that loves you like her own child?"

"Better than some of her children, I believe," said Bucklaw, "or there would be little love wared on the matter."

"And Colonel Sholto Douglas Ashton, who desires the marriage above all earthly things?"

"Because," said Bucklaw, "he expects to carry the county of —— through my interest."

"And the father, who is as keen to see the match concluded as ever I have been to win a main?"

"Ay," said Bucklaw, in the same disparaging manner, "it lies with Sir William's policy to secure the next best match, since he cannot barter his child to save the great Ravenswood estate, which the English House of Lords are about to wrench out of his clutches."

"What say you to the young lady herself?" said Craigengelt; "the finest young woman in all Scotland, one that you used to be so fond of when she was cross, and now she consents to have you, and gives up her engagement with Ravenswood, you are for jibbing. I must say, the devil's in ye, when ye neither know what you would have nor what you would want."

"I'll tell you my meaning in a word," answered Bucklaw, getting up and walking through the room; "I want to know what the devil is the cause of Miss Ashton's changing her mind so suddenly?"

"And what need you care," said Craigengelt, "since the change is in your favor?"

"I'll tell you what it is," returned his patron, "I never knew much of that sort of fine ladies, and I believe they may be as capricious as the devil; but there is something in Miss

Ashton's change a devilish deal too sudden and too serious for a mere flisk of her own. I'll be bound, Lady Ashton understands every machine for breaking in the human mind, and there are as many as there are cannon-bits, martingales, and cavessons for young colts."

"And if that were not the case," said Craigengelt, "how the devil should we ever get them into training at all?"

"And that's true too," said Bucklaw, suspending his march through the dining-room, and leaning upon the back of a chair. "And besides, here's Ravenswood in the way still; do you think he'll give up Lucy's engagement?"

"To be sure he will," answered Craigengelt; "what good can it do him to refuse, since he wishes to marry another woman, and she another man?"

"And you believe seriously," said Bucklaw, "that he is going to marry the foreign lady we heard of?"

"You heard yourself," answered Craigengelt, "what Captain Westenho said about it, and the great preparation made for their blithesome bridal."

"Captain Westenho," replied Bucklaw, "has rather too much of your own cast about him, Craigie, to make what Sir William would call a 'famous witness.' He drinks deep, plays deep, swears deep, and I suspect can lie and cheat a little into the bargain; useful qualities, Craigie, if kept in their proper sphere, but which have a little too much of the freebooter to make a figure in a court of evidence."

"Well, then," said Craigengelt, "will you believe Colonel Douglas Ashton, who heard the Marquis of A—— say in a public circle, but not aware that he was within ear-shot, that his kinsman had made a better arrangement for himself than to give his father's land for the pale-cheeked daughter of a broken-down fanatic, and that Bucklaw was welcome to the wearing of Ravenswood's shaughled shoes."

"Did he say so, by heavens!" cried Bucklaw, breaking out into one of those uncontrollable fits of passion to which he was constitutionally subject; "if I had heard him, I would have torn the tongue out of his throat before all his peats and minions, and Highland bullies into the bargain. Why did not Ashton run him through the body?"

"Capot me if I know," said the Captain. "He deserved it sure enough; but he is an old man, and a minister of state, and there would be more risk than credit in meddling with him. You had more need to think of making up to Miss Lucy Ashton the disgrace that's like to fall upon her than of interfering with a man too old to fight, and on too high a stool for your hand to reach him."

"It *shall* reach him, though, one day," said Bucklaw, "and his kinsman Ravenswood to boot. In the mean time, I'll take care Miss Ashton receives no discredit for the slight they have put upon her. It's an awkward job, however, and I wish it were ended; I scarce know how to talk to her,—but fill a bumper, Craigie, and we'll drink her health. It grows late, and a night-cowl of good claret is worth all the considering-caps in Europe."

CHAPTER XXIX

It was the copy of our conference.
In bed she slept not, for my urging it;
At board she fed not, for my urging it;
Alone, it was the subject of my theme;
In company I often glanced at it.

Comedy of Errors.

THE next morning saw Bucklaw and his faithful Achates, Craigengelt, at Ravenswood Castle. They were most courteously received by the knight and his lady, as well as by their son and heir, Colonel Ashton. After a good deal of stammering and blushing—for Bucklaw, notwithstanding his audacity in other matters, had all the sheepish bashfulness common to those who have lived in respectable society—he contrived at length to explain his wish to be admitted to a conference with Miss Ashton upon the subject of their approaching union. Sir William and his son looked at Lady Ashton, who replied with the greatest composure, "That Lucy would wait upon Mr. Hayston directly. I hope," she added with a smile, "that as Lucy is very young, and has been lately trepanned into an engagement of which she is now heartily ashamed, our dear Bucklaw will excuse her wish that I should be present at their interview?"

"In truth, my dear lady," said Bucklaw, "it is the very thing that I would have desired on my own account; for I have been so little accustomed to what is called gallantry, that I shall certainly fall into some cursed mistake unless I have the advantage of your ladyship as an interpreter."

It was thus that Bucklaw, in the perturbation of his embarrassment upon this critical occasion, forgot the just apprehensions he had entertained of Lady Ashton's overbearing ascendency over her daughter's mind, and lost an opportunity of ascertaining, by his own investigation, the real state of Lucy's feelings.

The other gentlemen left the room, and in a short time Lady Ashton, followed by her daughter, entered the apartment. She appeared, as he had seen her on former occasions, rather composed than agitated; but a nicer judge than he could scarce have determined whether her calmness was that of despair or of indifference. Bucklaw was too much

agitated by his own feelings minutely to scrutinize those of the lady. He stammered out an unconnected address, confounding together the two or three topics to which it related, and stopped short before he brought it to any regular conclusion. Miss Ashton listened, or looked as if she listened, but returned not a single word in answer, continuing to fix her eyes on a small piece of embroidery on which, as if by instinct or habit, her fingers were busily employed. Lady Ashton sat at some distance, almost screened from notice by the deep embrasure of the window in which she had placed her chair. From this she whispered, in a tone of voice which, though soft and sweet, had something in it of admonition, if not command—"Lucy, my dear, remember—have you heard what Bucklaw has been saying?"

The idea of her mother's presence seemed to have slipped from the unhappy girl's recollection. She started, dropped her needle, and repeated hastily, and almost in the same breath, the contradictory answers, "Yes, madam—no, my lady—I beg pardon, I did not hear."

"You need not blush, my love, and still less need you look so pale and frightened," said Lady Ashton, coming forward; "we know that maiden's ears must be slow in receiving a gentleman's language; but you must remember Mr. Hayston speaks on a subject on which you have long since agreed to give him a favorable hearing. You know how much your father and I have our hearts set upon an event so extremely desirable."

In Lady Ashton's voice, a tone of impressive, and even stern, innuendo was sedulously and skilfully concealed under an appearance of the most affectionate maternal tenderness. The manner was for Bucklaw, who was easily enough imposed upon; the matter of the exhortation was for the terrified Lucy, who well knew how to interpret her mother's hints, however skilfully their real purport might be veiled from general observation.

Miss Ashton sat upright in her chair, cast round her a glance in which fear was mingled with a still wilder expression, but remained perfectly silent. Bucklaw, who had in the meantime paced the room to and fro, until he had recovered his composure, now stopped within two or three yards of her chair, and broke out as follow: "I believe I have been a d—d fool, Miss Ashton; I have tried to speak to you as people tell me young ladies like to be talked to, and I don't think you comprehend what I have been saying; and no wonder, for d—n me if I understand it myself! But, however, once

for all, and in broad Scotch, your father and mother like what is proposed, and if you can take a plain young fellow for your husband, who will never cross you in anything you have a mind to, I will place you at the head of the best establishment in the three Lothians; you shall have Lady Girnington's lodging in the Canongate of Edinburgh, go where you please, do what you please, and see what you please—and that's fair. Only I must have a corner at the board-end for a worthless old playfellow of mine, whose company I would rather want than have, if it were not that the d—d fellow has persuaded me that I can't do without him; and so I hope you won't except against Craigie, although it might be easy to find much better company."

"Now, out upon you, Bucklaw," said Lady Ashton, again interposing; "how can you think Lucy can have any objection to that blunt, honest, good-natured creature, Captain Craigengelt?"

"Why, madam," replied Bucklaw, "as to Craigie's sincerity, honesty, and good-nature, they are, I believe, pretty much upon a par; but that's neither here nor there—the fellow knows my ways, and has got useful to me, and I cannot well do without him, as I said before. But all this is nothing to the purpose; for, since I have mustered up courage to make a plain proposal, I would fain hear Miss Ashton, from her own lips, give me a plain answer."

"My dear Bucklaw," said Lady Ashton, "let me spare Lucy's bashfulness. I tell you, in her presence, that she has already consented to be guided by her father and me in this matter. Lucy, my love," she added, with that singular combination of suavity of tone and pointed energy which we have already noticed—"Lucy, my dearest love! speak for yourself, is it not as I say?"

Her victim answered in a tremulous and hollow voice, "I *have* promised to obey you—but upon one condition!"

"She means," said Lady Ashton, turning to Bucklaw, "she expects an answer to the demand which she has made upon the man at Vienna, or Ratisbon, or Paris—or where is he?—for restitution of the engagement in which he had the art to involve her. You will not, I am sure, my dear friend, think it is wrong that she should feel much delicacy upon this head; indeed, it concerns us all."

"Perfectly right—quite fair," said Bucklaw, half humming, half speaking the end of the old song—

"'It is best to be off wi' the old love
Before you be on wi' the new.'

But I thought," said he, pausing, "you might have had an answer six times told from Ravenswood. D—n me, if I have not a mind to go and fetch one myself, if Miss Ashton will honor me with the commission."

"By no means," said Lady Ashton; "we have had the utmost difficulty of preventing Douglas, for whom it would be more proper, from taking so rash a step; and do you think we could permit you, my good friend, almost equally dear to us, to go to a desperate man upon an errand so desperate? In fact, all the friends of the family are of opinion, and my dear Lucy herself ought so to think, that, as this unworthy person has returned no answer to her letter, silence must on this, as in other cases, be held to give consent, and a contract must be supposed to be given up, when the party waives insisting upon it. Sir William, who should know best, is clear upon this subject; and therefore, my dear Lucy——"

"Madam," said Lucy, with unwonted energy, "urge me no farther; if this unhappy engagement be restored, I have already said you shall dispose of me as you will; till then I should commit a heavy sin in the sight of God and man in doing what you require."

"But, my love, if this man remains obstinately silent——"

"He will *not* be silent," answered Lucy; "it is six weeks since I sent him a double of my former letter by a sure hand."

"You have not—you could not—you durst not," said Lady Ashton, with violence inconsistent with the tone she had intended to assume; but instantly correcting herself, "My dearest Lucy," said she, in her sweetest tone of expostulation, "how could you think of such a thing?"

"No matter," said Bucklaw; "I respect Miss Ashton for her sentiments, and I only wish I had been her messenger myself."

"And pray how long, Miss Ashton," said her mother, ironically, "are we to wait the return of your Pacolet—your fairy messenger—since our humble couriers of flesh and blood could not be trusted in this matter?"

"I have numbered weeks, days, hours, and minutes," said Miss Ashton; "within another week I shall have an answer, unless he is dead. Till that time, sir," she said, addressing Bucklaw, "let me be thus far beholden to you, that you will beg my mother to forbear me upon this subject."

"I will make it my particular entreaty to Lady Ashton," said Bucklaw. "By my honor, madam, I respect your feelings; and, although the prosecution of this affair be rendered

dearer to me than ever, yet, as I am a gentleman, I would renounce it, were it so urged as to give you a moment's pain."

"Mr. Hayston, I think, cannot apprehend that," said Lady Ashton, looking pale with anger, "when the daughter's happiness lies in the bosom of the mother. Let me ask you, Miss Ashton, in what terms your last letter was couched?"

"Exactly in the same, madam," answered Lucy, "which you dictated on a former occasion."

"When eight days have elapsed, then," said her mother, resuming her tone of tenderness, "we shall hope, my dearest love, that you will end this suspense."

"Miss Ashton must not be hurried, madam," said Bucklaw, whose bluntness of feeling did not by any means arise from want of good-nature; "messengers may be stopped or delayed. I have known a day's journey broke by the casting of a fore-shoe. Stay, let me see my calendar: the twentieth day from this is St. Jude's, and the day before I must be at Caverton Edge, to see the match between the Laird of Kittlegirth's black mare and Johnston the meal-monger's four-year-old colt; but I can ride all night, or Craigie can bring me word how the match goes; and I hope, in the mean time, as I shall not myself distress Miss Ashton with any farther importunity, that your ladyship yourself, and Sir William, and Colonel Douglas will have the goodness to allow her uninterrupted time for making up her mind."

'Sir," said Miss Ashton, "you are generous."

"As for that, madam," answered Bucklaw, "I only pretend to be a plain, good-humored young fellow, as I said before, who will willingly make you happy if you will permit him, and show him how to do so."

Having said this, he saluted her with more emotion than was consistent with his usual train of feeling, and took his leave; Lady Ashton, as she accompanied him out of the apartment, assuring him that her daughter did full justice to the sincerity of his attachment, and requesting him to see Sir William before his departure, "since," as she said, with a keen glance reverting towards Lucy, "against St. Jude's day, we must all be ready to *sign and seal.*"

"To sign and seal!" echoed Lucy in a muttering tone, as the door of the apartment closed—"to sign and seal—to do and die!" and, clasping her extenuated hands together, she sank back on the easy-chair she occupied, in a state resembling stupor.

From this she was shortly after awakened by the boisterous entry of her brother Henry, who clamorously reminded her

of a promise to give him two yards of carnation ribbon to make knots to his new garters. With the most patient composure Lucy arose, and opening a little ivory cabinet, sought out the ribbon the lad wanted, measured it accurately, cut it off into proper lengths, and knotted it into the fashion his boyish whim required.

"Dinna shut the cabinet yet," said Henry, "for I must have some of your silver wire to fasten the bells to my hawk's jesses,—and yet the new falcon's not worth them neither; for do you know, after all the plague we had to get her from an eyrie, all the way at Posso, in Mannor Water, she's going to prove, after all, nothing better than a rifler: she just wets her singles in the blood of the partridge, and then breaks away, and lets her fly; and what good can the poor bird do after that, you know, except pine and die in the first heather-cow or whin-bush she can crawl into?"

"Right, Henry—right—very right," said Lucy, mournfully, holding the boy fast by the hand, after she had given him the wire he wanted; "but there are more riflers in the world than your falcon, and more wounded birds that seek but to die in quiet, that can find neither brake nor whin-bush to hide their heads in."

"Ah! that's some speech out of your romance," said the boy; "and Sholto says they have turned your head. But I hear Norman whistling to the hawk; I must go fasten on the jesses."

And he scampered away with the thoughtless gayety of boyhood, leaving his sister to the bitterness of her own reflections.

"It is decreed," she said, "that every living creature, even those who owe me most kindness, are to shun me, and leave me to those by whom I am beset. It is just it should be thus. Alone and uncounselled, I involved myself in these perils; alone and uncounselled, I must extricate myself or die."

CHAPTER XXX

> What doth ensue
> But moody and dull melancholy,
> Kinsman to grim and comfortless despair,
> And, at her heels, a huge infectious troop
> Of pale distemperatures, and foes to life?
>
> *Comedy of Errors.*

As some vindication of the ease with which Bucklaw (who otherwise, as he termed himself, was really a very good-humored fellow) resigned his judgment to the management of Lady Ashton, while paying his addresses to her daughter, the reader must call to mind the strict domestic discipline which, at this period, was exercised over the females of a Scottish family.

The manners of the country in this, as in many other respects, coincided with those of France before the Revolution. Young women of the higher ranks seldom mingled in society until after marriage, and, both in law and fact, were held to be under the strict tutelage of their parents, who were too apt to enforce the views for their settlement in life without paying any regard to the inclination of the parties chiefly interested. On such occasions, the suitor expected little more from his bride than a silent acquiescence in the will of her parents ; and as few opportunities of acquaintance, far less of intimacy, occurred, he made his choice by the outside, as the lovers in the *Merchant of Venice* select the casket, contented to trust to chance the issue of the lottery in which he had hazarded a venture.

It was not therefore suprising, such being the general manners of the age, that Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw, whom dissipated habits had detached in some degree from the best society, should not attend particularly to those feelings in his elected bride to which many men of more sentiment, experience, and reflection would, in all probability, have been equally indifferent. He knew what all accounted the principal point, that her parents and friends, namely, were decidedly in his favor, and that there existed most powerful reasons for their predilection.

In truth, the conduct of the Marquis of A——, since Ravenswood's departure, had been such as almost to bar the possibility of his kinsman's union with Lucy Ashton. The Marquis was Ravenswood's sincere but misjudging friend; or rather, like many friends and patrons, he consulted what he considered to be his relation's true interest, although he knew that in doing so he run counter to his inclinations.

The Marquis drove on, therefore, with the plenitude of ministerial authority, an appeal to the British House of Peers against those judgments of the courts of law by which Sir William became possessed of Ravenswood's hereditary property. As this measure, enforced with all the authority of power, was new in Scottish judicial proceedings, though now so frequently resorted to, it was exclaimed against by the lawyers on the opposite side of politics, as an interference with the civil judicature of the country, equally new, arbitrary, and tyrannical. And if it thus affected even strangers connected with them only by political party, it may be guessed what the Ashton family themselves said and thought under so gross a dispensation. Sir William, still more worldly-minded than he was timid, was reduced to despair by the loss by which he was threatened. His son's haughtier spirit was exalted into rage at the idea of being deprived of his expected patrimony. But to Lady Ashton's yet more vindictive temper the conduct of Ravenswood, or rather of his patron, appeared to be an offence challenging the deepest and most immortal revenge. Even the quiet and confiding temper of Lucy herself, swayed by the opinions expressed by all around her, could not but consider the conduct of Ravenswood as precipitate, and even unkind. "It was my father," she repeated with a sigh, "who welcomed him to this place, and encouraged, or at least allowed, the intimacy between us. Should he not have remembered this, and requited it with at least some moderate degree of procrastination in the assertion of his own alleged rights? I would have forfeited for him double the value of these lands, which he pursues with an ardor that shows he has forgotten how much I am implicated in the matter."

Lucy, however, could only murmur these things to herself, unwilling to increase the prejudices against her lover entertained by all around her, who exclaimed against the steps pursued on his account as illegal, vexatious, and tyrannical, resembling the worst measures in the worst times of the worst Stuarts, and a degradation of Scotland, the decisions of whose learned judges were thus subjected to the re-

view of a court composed indeed of men of the highest rank, but who were not trained to the study of any municipal law, and might be supposed specially to hold in contempt that of Scotland. As a natural consequence of the alleged injustice meditated towards her father, every means was resorted to, and every argument urged, to induce Miss Ashton to break off her engagement with Ravenswood, as being scandalous, shameful, and sinful, formed with the mortal enemy of her family, and calculated to add bitterness to the distress of her parents.

Lucy's spirit, however, was high, and, although unaided and alone, she could have borne much : she could have endured the repinings of her father ; his murmurs against what he called the tyrannical usage of the ruling party ; his ceaseless charges of ingratitude against Ravenswood ; his endless lectures on the various means by which contracts may be voided and annulled ; his quotations from the civil, the municipal, and the canon law ; and his prelections upon the *patria potestas.*

She might have borne also in patience, or repelled with scorn, the bitter taunts and occasional violence of her brother, Colonel Douglas Ashton, and the impertinent and intrusive interference of other friends and relations. But it was beyond her power effectually to withstand or elude the constant and unceasing persecution of Lady Ashton, who, laying every other wish aside, had bent the whole efforts of her powerful mind to break her daughter's contract with Ravenswood, and to place a perpetual bar between the lovers, by effecting Lucy's union with Bucklaw. Far more deeply skilled than her husband in the recesses of the human heart, she was aware that in this way she might strike a blow of deep and decisive vengeance upon one whom she esteemed as her mortal enemy ; nor did she hesitate at raising her arm, although she knew that the wound must be dealt through the bosom of her daughter. With this stern and fixed purpose, she sounded every deep and shallow of her daughter's soul, assumed alternately every disguise of manner which could serve her object, and prepared at leisure every species of dire machinery by which the human mind can be wrenched from its settled determination. Some of these were of an obvious description, and require only to be cursorily mentioned ; others were characteristic of the time, the country, and the persons engaged in this singular drama.

It was of the last consequence that all intercourse betwixt the lovers should be stopped, and, by dint of gold and

authority, Lady Ashton contrived to possess herself of such a complete command of all who were placed around her daughter, that, in fact, no leaguered fortress was ever more completely blockaded; while, at the same time, to all outward appearance Miss Ashton lay under no restriction. The verge of her parents' domains became, in respect to her, like the viewless and enchanted line drawn around a fairy castle, where nothing unpermitted can either enter from without or escape from within. Thus every letter, in which Ravenswood conveyed to Lucy Ashton the indispensable reasons which detained him abroad, and more than one note which poor Lucy had addressed to him through what she thought a secure channel, fell into the hands of her mother. It could not be but that the tenor of these intercepted letters, especially those of Ravenswood, should contain something to irritate the passions and fortify the obstinacy of her into whose hands they fell; but Lady Ashton's passions were too deep-rooted to require this fresh food. She burnt the papers as regularly as she perused them; and as they consumed into vapor and tinder, regarded them with a smile upon her compressed lips, and an exultation in her steady eye, which showed her confidence that the hopes of the writers should soon be rendered equally unsubstantial.

It usually happens that fortune aids the machinations of those who are prompt to avail themselves of every chance that offers. A report was wafted from the continent, founded, like others of the same sort, upon many plausible circumstances, but without any real basis, stating the Master of Ravenswood to be on the eve of marriage with a foreign lady of fortune and distinction. This was greedily caught up by both the political parties, who were at once struggling for power and for popular favor, and who seized, as usual, upon the most private circumstances in the lives of each other's partisans to convert them into subjects of political discussion.

The Marquis of A—— gave his opinion aloud and publicly, not indeed in the coarse terms ascribed to him by Captain Craigengelt, but in a manner sufficiently offensive to the Ashtons. "He thought the report," he said, "highly probable, and heartily wished it might be true. Such a match was fitter and far more creditable for a spirited young fellow than a marriage with the daughter of an old Whig lawyer, whose chicanery had so nearly ruined his father."

The other party, of course, laying out of view the opposition which the Master of Ravenswood received from Miss Ashton's family, cried shame upon his fickleness and perfidy,

as if he had seduced the young lady into an engagement, and wilfully and causelessly abandoned her for another.

Sufficient care was taken that this report should find its way to Ravenswood Castle through every various channel, Lady Ashton being well aware that the very reiteration of the same rumor, from so many quarters, could not but give it a semblance of truth. By some it was told as a piece of ordinary news, by some communicated as serious intelligence; now it was whispered to Lucy Ashton's ear in the tone of malignant pleasantry, and now transmitted to her as a matter of grave and serious warning.

Even the boy Henry was made the instrument of adding to his sister's torments. One morning he rushed into the room with a willow branch in his hand, which he told her had arrived that instant from Germany for her special wearing. Lucy, as we have seen, was remarkably fond of her younger brother, and at that moment his wanton and thoughtless unkindness seemed more keenly injurious than even the studied insults of her elder brother. Her grief, however, had no shade of resentment; she folded her arms about the boy's neck, and saying faintly, "Poor Henry! you speak but what they tell you," she burst into a flood of unrestrained tears. The boy was moved, notwithstanding the thoughtlessness of his age and character. "The devil take me," said he, "Lucy, if I fetch you any more of these tormenting messages again; for I like you better," said he, kissing away the tears, "than the whole pack of them; and you shall have my gray pony to ride on, and you shall canter him if you like,—ay, and ride beyond the village too, if you have a mind."

"Who told you," said Lucy, "that I am not permitted to ride where I please?"

"That's a secret," said the boy; "but you will find you can never ride beyond the village but your horse will cast a shoe, or fall lame, or the castle bell will ring, or something will happen to bring you back. But if I tell you more of these things, Douglas will not get me the pair of colors they have promised me, and so good-morrow to you."

This dialogue plunged Lucy in still deeper dejection, as it tended to show her plainly what she had for some time suspected, that she was little better than a prisoner at large in her father's house. We have described her in the outset of our story as of a romantic disposition, delighting in tales of love and wonder, and really identifying herself with the situation of those legendary heroines with those adventures, for want of better reading her memory had become stocked.

The fairy wand, with which in her solitude she had delighted to raise visions of enchantment, became now the rod of a magician, the bond slave of evil genii, serving only to invoke spectres at which the exorcist trembled. She felt herself the object of suspicion, of scorn, of dislike at least, if not of hatred, to her own family; and it seemed to her that she was abandoned by the very person on whose account she was exposed to the enmity of all around her. Indeed, the evidence of Ravenswood's infidelity began to assume every day a more determined character.

A soldier of fortune, of the name of Westenho, an old familiar of Craigengelt's, chanced to arrive from abroad about this time. The worthy Captain, though without any precise communication with Lady Ashton, always acted most regularly and sedulously in support of her plans, and easily prevailed upon his friend, by dint of exaggeration of real circumstances and coining of others, to give explicit testimony to the truth of Ravenswood's approaching marriage.

Thus beset on all hands, and in a manner reduced to despair, Lucy's temper gave way under the pressure of constant affliction and persecution. She became gloomy and abstracted, and, contrary to her natural and ordinary habit of mind, sometimes turned with spirit, and even fierceness, on those by whom she was long and closely annoyed. Her health also began to be shaken, and her hectic cheek and wandering eye gave symptoms of what is called a fever upon the spirits. In most mothers this would have moved compassion; but Lady Ashton, compact and firm of purpose, saw these waverings of health and intellect with no greater sympathy than that with which the hostile engineer regards the towers of a beleaguered city as they reel under the discharge of his artillery; or rather, she considered these starts and inequalities of temper as symptoms of Lucy's expiring resolution; as the angler, by the throes and convulsive exertions of the fish which he has hooked, becomes aware that he soon will be able to land him. To accelerate the catastrophe in the present case, Lady Ashton had recourse to an expedient very consistent with the temper and credulity of those times, but which the reader will probably pronounce truly detestable and diabolical.

CHAPTER XXXI

In which a witch did dwell, in loathly weeds,
And wilful want, all careless of her needs;
So choosing solitary to abide,
Far from all neighbors, that her devilish deeds
And hellish arts from people she might hide,
And hurt far off, unknown, whome'er she envied.

Faërie Queene.

THE health of Lucy Ashton soon required the assistance of a person more skilful in the office of a sick-nurse than the female domestics of the family. Ailsie Gourlay, sometimes called the Wise Woman of Bowden, was the person whom, for her own strong reasons, Lady Ashton selected as an attendant upon her daughter.

This woman had acquired a considerable reputation among the ignorant by the pretended cures which she performed, especially in "oncomes," as the Scotch call them, or mysterious diseases, which baffle the regular physician. Her pharmacopœia consisted partly of herbs selected in planetary hours, partly of words, signs, and charms, which sometimes, perhaps, produced a favorable influence upon the imagination of her patients. Such was the avowed profession of Luckie Gourlay, which, as may well be supposed, was looked upon with a suspicious eye, not only by her neighbors, but even by the clergy of the district. In private, however, she traded more deeply in the occult sciences; for, notwithstanding the dreadful punishments inflicted upon the supposed crime of witchcraft, there wanted not those who, steeled by want and bitterness of spirit, were willing to adopt the hateful and dangerous character, for the sake of the influence which its terrors enabled them to exercise in the vicinity, and the wretched emolument which they could extract by the practice of their supposed art.

Ailsie Gourlay was not indeed fool enough to acknowledge a compact with the Evil One, which would have been a swift and ready road to the stake and tar-barrel. Her fairy, she said, like Caliban's, was a harmless fairy. Nevertheless, she "spaed fortunes," read dreams, composed philters, discovered

stolen goods, and made and dissolved matches as successfully as if, according to the belief of the whole neighborhood, she had been aided in those arts by Beelzebub himself. The worst of the pretenders to these sciences was, that they were generally persons who, feeling themselves odious to humanity, were careless of what they did to deserve the public hatred. Real crimes were often committed under pretence of magical imposture; and it somewhat relieves the disgust with which we read, in the criminal records, the conviction of these wretches, to be aware that many of them merited, as poisoners, suborners, and diabolical agents in secret domestic crimes, the severe fate to which they were condemned for the imaginary guilt of witchcraft.

Such was Ailsie Gourlay, whom, in order to attain the absolute subjugation of Lucy Ashton's mind, her mother thought it fitting to place near her person. A woman of less consequence than Lady Ashton had not dared to take such a step; but her high rank and strength of character set her above the censure of the world, and she was allowed to have selected for her daughter's attendant the best and most experienced sick-nurse and "mediciner" in the neighborhood, where an inferior person would have fallen under the reproach of calling in the assistance of a partner and ally of the great Enemy of mankind.

The beldam caught her cue readily and by innuendo, without giving Lady Ashton the pain of distinct explanation. She was in many respects qualified for the part she played, which indeed could not be efficiently assumed without some knowledge of the human heart and passions. Dame Gourlay perceived that Lucy shuddered at her external appearance, which we have already described when we found her in the death-chamber of blind Alice; and while internally she hated the poor girl for the involuntary horror with which she saw she was regarded, she commenced her operations by endeavoring to efface or overcome those prejudices which, in her heart, she resented as mortal offences. This was easily done, for the hag's external ugliness was soon balanced by a show of kindness and interest, to which Lucy had of late been little accustomed; her attentive services and real skill gained her the ear, if not the confidence, of her patient; and under pretence of diverting the solitude of a sick-room, she soon led her attention captive by the legends in which she was well skilled, and to which Lucy's habits of reading and reflection induced her to "lend an attentive ear." Dame Gourlay's tales were at first of a mild and interesting character—

Of fays that nightly dance upon the wold,
And lovers doom'd to wander and to weep,
And castles high, where wicked wizards keep
Their captive thralls.

Gradually, however, they assumed a darker and more mysterious character, and became such as, told by the midnight lamp, and enforced by the tremulous tone, the quivering and livid lip, the uplifted skinny forefinger, and the shaking head of the blue-eyed hag, might have appalled a less credulous imagination in an age more hard of belief. The old Sycorax saw her advantage, and gradually narrowed her magic circle around the devoted victim on whose spirit she practised. Her legends began to relate to the fortunes of the Ravenswood family, whose ancient grandeur and portentous authority credulity had graced with so many superstitious attributes. The story of the fatal fountain was narrated at full length, and with formidable additions, by the ancient sibyl. The prophecy, quoted by Caleb, concerning the dead bride who was to be won by the last of the Ravenswoods, had its own mysterious commentary; and the singular circumstance of the apparition seen by the Master of Ravenswood in the forest, having partly transpired through his hasty inquiries in the cottage of Old Alice, formed a theme for many exaggerations.

Lucy might have despised these tales if they had been related concerning another family, or if her own situation had been less despondent. But circumstanced as she was, the idea that an evil fate hung over her attachment became predominant over her other feelings; and the gloom of superstition darkened a mind already sufficiently weakened by sorrow, distress, uncertainty, and an oppressive sense of desertion and desolation. Stories were told by her attendant so closely resembling her own in their circumstances, that she was gradually led to converse upon such tragic and mystical subjects with the beldam, and to repose a sort of confidence in the sibyl, whom she still regarded with involuntary shuddering. Dame Gourlay knew how to avail herself of this imperfect confidence. She directed Lucy's thoughts to the means of inquiring into futurity—the surest mode, perhaps, of shaking the understanding and destroying the spirits. Omens were expounded, dreams were interpreted, and other tricks of jugglery perhaps resorted to, by which the pretended adepts of the period deceived and fascinated their deluded followers. I find it mentioned in the articles of dittay against Ailsie Gourlay—for it is some comfort to

know that the old hag was tried, condemned, and burned on the top of North Berwick Law, by sentence of a commission from the privy council—I find, I say, it was charged against her, among other offences, that she had, by the aid and delusions of Satan, shown to a young person of quality, in a mirror glass, a gentleman then abroad, to whom the said young person was betrothed, and who appeared in the vision to be in the act of bestowing his hand upon another lady. But this and some other parts of the record appear to have been studiously left imperfect in names and dates, probably out of regard to the honor of the families concerned. If Dame Gourlay was able actually to play off such a piece of jugglery, it is clear she must have had better assistance to practise the deception than her own skill or funds could supply. Meanwhile, this mysterious visionary traffic had its usual effect in unsettling Miss Ashton's mind. Her temper became unequal, her health decayed daily, her manners grew moping, melancholy, and uncertain. Her father, guessing partly at the cause of these appearances, and exerting a degree of authority unusual with him, made a point of banishing Dame Gourlay from the castle; but the arrow was shot, and was rankling barb-deep in the side of the wounded deer.

It was shortly after the departure of this woman, that Lucy Ashton, urged by her parents, announced to them, with a vivacity by which they were startled, "That she was conscious heaven and earth and hell had set themselves against her union with Ravenswood; still her contract," she said, "was a binding contract, and she neither would nor could resign it without the consent of Ravenswood. Let me be assured," she concluded, "that he will free me from my engagement, and dispose of me as you please, I care not how. When the diamonds are gone, what signifies the casket?"

The tone of obstinacy with which this was said, her eyes flashing with unnatural light, and her hands firmly clinched, precluded the possibility of dispute; and the utmost length which Lady Ashton's art could attain, only got her the privilege of dictating the letter, by which her daughter required to know of Ravenswood whether he intended to abide by or to surrender what she termed "their unfortunate engagement." Of this advantage Lady Ashton so far and so ingeniously availed herself that, according to the wording of the letter, the reader would have supposed Lucy was calling upon her lover to renounce a contract which was contrary to the interests and inclinations of both. Not trusting even to this point of de-

ception, Lady Ashton finally determined to suppress the letter altogether, in hopes that Lucy's impatience would induce her to condemn Ravenswood unheard and in absence. In this she was disappointed. The time, indeed, had long elapsed when an answer should have been received from the continent. The faint ray of hope which still glimmered in Lucy's mind was well-nigh extinguished. But the idea never forsook her that her letter might not have been duly forwarded. One of her mother's new machinations unexpectedly furnished her with the means of ascertaining what she most desired to know.

The female agent of hell having been dismissed from the castle, Lady Ashton, who wrought by all variety of means, resolved to employ, for working the same end on Lucy's mind, an agent of a very different character. This was no other than the Reverend Mr. Bide-the-Bent, a Presbyterian clergyman, formerly mentioned, of the strictest order and the most rigid orthodoxy, whose aid she called in, upon the principle of the tyrant in the tragedy:

> **I'll have a priest shall preach her from her faith,**
> **And make it sin not to renounce that vow**
> **Which I'd have broken.**

But Lady Ashton was mistaken in the agent she had selected. His prejudices, indeed, were easily enlisted on her side, and it was no difficult matter to make him regard with horror the prospect of a union betwixt the daughter of a God-fearing, professing, and Presbyterian family of distinction and the heir of a bloodthirsty prelatist and persecutor, the hands of whose fathers had been dyed to the wrists in the blood of God's saints. This resembled, in the divine's opinion, the union of a Moabitish stranger with a daughter of Zion. But with all the more severe prejudices and principles of his sect, Bide-the-Bent possessed a sound judgment, and had learned sympathy even in that very school of persecution where the heart is so frequently hardened. In a private interview with Miss Ashton, he was deeply moved by her distress, and could not but admit the justice of her request to be permitted a direct communication with Ravenswood upon the subject of their solemn contract. When she urged to him the great uncertainty under which she labored whether her letter had been ever forwarded, the old man paced the room with long steps, shook his gray head, rested repeatedly for a space on his ivory-headed staff, and, after much hesitation, confessed that he thought her doubts so reasonable that he would himself aid in the removal of them.

"I cannot but opine, Miss Lucy," he said, "that your worshipful lady mother hath in this matter an eagerness whilk, although it ariseth doubtless from love to your best interests here and hereafter, for the man is of persecuting blood, and himself a persecutor, a Cavalier or Malignant, and a scoffer, who hath no inheritance in Jesse; nevertheless, we are commanded to do justice unto all, and to fulfil our bond and covenant, as well to the stranger as to him who is in brotherhood with us. Wherefore myself, even I myself, will be aiding unto the delivery of your letter to the man Edgar Ravenswood, trusting that the issue thereof may be your deliverance from the nets in which he hath sinfully engaged you. And that I may do in this neither more nor less than hath been warranted by your honorable parents, I pray you to transcribe, without increment or subtraction, the letter formerly expeded under the dictation of your right honorable mother; and I shall put it into such sure course of being delivered, that if, honored young madam, you shall receive no answer, it will be necessary that you conclude that the man meaneth in silence to abandon that naughty contract, which, peradventure, he may be unwilling directly to restore."

Lucy eagerly embraced the expedient of the worthy divine. A new letter was written in the precise terms of the former, and consigned by Mr. Bide-the-Bent to the charge of Saunders Moonshine, a zealous elder of the church when on shore, and when on board his brig as bold a smuggler as ever ran out a sliding bowsprit to the winds that blow betwixt Campvere and the east coast of Scotland. At the recommendation of his pastor, Saunders readily undertook that the letter should be securely conveyed to the Master of Ravenswood at the court where he now resided.

This retrospect became necessary to explain the conference betwixt Miss Ashton, her mother, and Bucklaw which we have detailed in a preceding chapter.

Lucy was now like the sailor who, while drifting through a tempestuous ocean, clings for safety to a single plank, his powers of grasping it becoming every moment more feeble, and the deep darkness of the night only checkered by the flashes of lightning, hissing as they show the white tops of the billow, in which he is soon to be ingulfed.

Week crept away after week, and day after day. St. Jude's day arrived, the last and protracted term to which Lucy had limited herself, and there was neither letter nor news of Ravenswood.

CHAPTER XXXII

How fair these names, how much unlike they look
To all the blurr'd subscriptions in my book!
The bridegroom's letters stand in row above,
Tapering, yet straight, like pine-trees in his grove;
While free and fine the bride's appear below,
As light and slender as her jessamines grow.

CRABBE.

ST. JUDE'S day came, the term assigned by Lucy herself as the farthest date of expectation, and, as we have already said, there were neither letters from nor news of Ravenswood. But there were news of Bucklaw, and of his trusty associate Craigengelt, who arrived early in the morning for the completion of the proposed espousals, and for signing the necessary deeds.

These had been carefully prepared under the revisal of Sir William Ashton himself, it having been resolved, on account of the state of Miss Ashton's health, as it was said, that none save the parties immediately interested should be present when the parchments were subscribed. It was farther determined that the marriage should be solemnized upon the fourth day after signing the articles, a measure adopted by Lady Ashton, in order that Lucy might have as little time as possible to recede or relapse into intractability. There was no appearance, however, of her doing either. She heard the proposed arrangement with the calm indifference of despair, or rather with an apathy arising from the oppressed and stupefied state of her feelings. To an eye so unobserving as that of Bucklaw, her demeanor had little more of reluctance than might suit the character of a bashful young lady, who, however, he could not disguise from himself, was complying with the choice of her friends rather than exercising any personal predilection in his favor.

When the morning compliments of the bridegroom had been paid, Miss Ashton was left for some time to herself; her mother remarking, that the deeds must be signed before the hour of noon, in order that the marriage might be happy.

Lucy suffered herself to be attired for the occasion as the taste of her attendants suggested, and was of course splendidly arrayed. Her dress was composed of white satin and Brussels

lace, and her hair arranged with a profusion of jewels, whose lustre made a strange contrast to the deadly paleness of her complexion, and to the trouble which dwelt in her unsettled eye.

Her toilette was hardly finished ere Henry appeared, to conduct the passive bride to the state apartment, where all was prepared for signing the contract. "Do you know, sister," he said, "I am glad you are to have Bucklaw after all, instead of Ravenswood, who looked like a Spanish grandee come to cut our throats and trample our bodies under foot. And I am glad the broad seas are between us this day, for I shall never forget how frightened I was when I took him for the picture of old Sir Malise walked out of the canvas. Tell me true, are you not glad to be fairly shot of him?"

"Ask me no questions, dear Henry," said his unfortunate sister; "there is little more can happen to make me either glad or sorry in this world."

"And that's what all young brides say," said Henry; "and so do not be cast down, Lucy, for you'll tell another tale a twelvemonth hence; and I am to be bride's-man, and ride before you to the kirk; and all our kith, kin, and allies, and all Bucklaw's, are to be mounted and in order; and I am to have a scarlet laced coat, and a feathered hat, and a sword-belt, double bordered with gold, and *point d'Espagne*, and a dagger instead of a sword; and I should like a sword much better, but my father won't hear of it. All my things, and a hundred besides, are to come out from Edinburgh to-night with old Gilbert and the sumpter mules; and I will bring them and show them to you the instant they come."

The boy's chatter was here interrupted by the arrival of Lady Ashton, somewhat alarmed at her daughter's stay. With one of her sweetest smiles, she took Lucy's arm under her own, and led her to the apartment where her presence was expected.

There were only present, Sir William Ashton and Colonel Douglas Ashton, the last in full regimentals; Bucklaw, in bridegroom trim; Craigengelt, freshly equipped from top to toe by the bounty of his patron, and bedizened with as much lace as might have become the dress of the Copper Captain; together with the Rev. Mr. Bide-the-Bent; the presence of a minister being, in strict Presbyterian families, an indispensable requisite upon all occasions of unusual solemnity.

Wines and refreshments were placed on a table, on which the writings were displayed, ready for signature.

But before proceeding either to business or refreshment,

Mr. Bide-the-Bent, at a signal from Sir William Ashton, invited the company to join him in a short extemporary prayer, in which he implored a blessing upon the contract now to be solemnized between the honorable parties then present. With the simplicity of his times and profession, which permitted strong personal allusions, he petitioned that the wounded mind of one of these noble parties might be healed, in reward of her compliance with the advice of her right honorable parents; and that, as she had proved herself a child after God's commandment, by honoring her father and mother, she and hers might enjoy the promised blessing—length of days in the land here, and a happy portion hereafter in a better country. He prayed farther, that the bridegroom might be weaned from those follies which seduce youth from the path of knowledge; that he might cease to take delight in vain and unprofitable company, scoffers, rioters, and those who sit late at the wine (here Bucklaw winked to Craigengelt), and cease from the society that causeth to err. A suitable supplication in behalf of Sir William and Lady Ashton and their family concluded this religious address, which thus embraced every individual present excepting Craigengelt, whom the worthy divine probably considered as past all hopes of grace.

The business of the day now went forward: Sir William Ashton signed the contract with legal solemnity and precision; his son, with military nonchalance; and Bucklaw, having subscribed as rapidly as Craigengelt could manage to turn the leaves, concluded by wiping his pen on that worthy's new laced cravat.

It was now Miss Ashton's turn to sign the writings, and she was guided by her watchful mother to the table for that purpose. At her first attempt, she began to write with a dry pen, and when the circumstance was pointed out, seemed unable, after several attempts, to dip it in the massive silver ink-standish, which stood full before her. Lady Ashton's vigilance hastened to supply the deficiency. I have myself seen the fatal deed, and in the distinct characters in which the name of Lucy Ashton is traced on each page there is only a very slight tremulous irregularity, indicative of her state of mind at the time of the subscription. But the last signature is incomplete, defaced, and blotted; for, while her hand was employed in tracing it, the hasty tramp of a horse was heard at the gate, succeeded by a step in the outer gallery, and a voice which, in a commanding tone, bore down the opposition of the menials. The pen dropped from Lucy's fingers, as she exclaimed with a faint shriek—"He is come—he is come!"

CHAPTER XXXIII

This by his tongue should be a Montague!
Fetch me my rapier, boy;
Now, by the faith and honor of my kin,
To strike him dead I hold it not a sin.

Romeo and Juliet.

HARDLY had Miss Ashton dropped the pen, when the door of the apartment flew open, and the Master of Ravenswood entered the apartment.

Lockhard and another domestic, who had in vain attempted to oppose his passage through the gallery or antechamber, were seen standing on the threshold transfixed with surprise, which was instantly communicated to the whole party in the state-room. That of Colonel Douglas Ashton was mingled with resentment; that of Bucklaw with haughty and affected indifference; the rest, even Lady Ashton herself, showed signs of fear; and Lucy seemed stiffened to stone by this unexpected apparition. Apparition it might well be termed, for Ravenswood had more the appearance of one returned from the dead than of a living visitor.

He planted himself full in the middle of the apartment, opposite to the table at which Lucy was seated, on whom, as if she had been alone in the chamber, he bent his eyes with a mingled expression of deep grief and deliberate indignation. His dark-colored riding cloak, displaced from one shoulder, hung around one side of his person in the ample folds of the Spanish mantle. The rest of his rich dress was travel-soiled, and deranged by hard riding. He had a sword by his side, and pistols in his belt. His slouched hat, which he had not removed at entrance, gave an additional gloom to his dark features, which, wasted by sorrow and marked by the ghastly look communicated by long illness, added to a countenance naturally somewhat stern and wild a fierce and even savage expression. The matted and dishevelled locks of hair which escaped from under his hat, together with his fixed and unmoved posture, made his head more resemble that of a marble bust than that of a living man. He said not a single word, and there was a deep silence in the company for more than two minutes.

It was broken by Lady Ashton, who in that space partly recovered her natural audacity. She demanded to know the cause of this unauthorized intrusion.

"That is a question, madam," said her son, "which I have the best right to ask; and I must request of the Master of Ravenswood to follow me where he can answer it at leisure."

Bucklaw interposed, saying, "No man on earth should usurp his previous right in demanding an explanation from the Master. Craigengelt," he added, in an undertone, "d—n ye, why do you stand staring as if you saw a ghost? fetch me my sword from the gallery."

"I will relinquish to none," said Colonel Ashton, "my right of calling to account the man who has offered this unparalleled affront to my family."

"Be patient, gentlemen," said Ravenswood, turning sternly towards them, and waving his hand as if to impose silence on their altercation. "If you are as weary of your lives as I am, I will find time and place to pledge mine against one or both; at present, I have no leisure for the disputes of triflers."

"Triflers!" echoed Colonel Ashton, half unsheathing his sword, while Bucklaw laid his hand on the hilt of that which Craigengelt had just reached him.

Sir William Ashton, alarmed for his son's safety, rushed between the young men and Ravenswood, exclaiming, "My son, I command you—Bucklaw, I entreat you—keep the peace, in the name of the Queen and of the law!"

"In the name of the law of God," said Bide-the-Bent, advancing also with uplifted hands between Bucklaw, the Colonel, and the object of their resentment—"in the name of Him who brought peace on earth and good-will to mankind, I implore—I beseech—I command you to forbear violence towards each other! God hateth the bloodthirsty man; he who striketh with the sword shall perish with the sword."

"Do you take me for a dog, sir," said Colonel Ashton, turning fiercely upon him, "or something more brutally stupid, to endure this insult in my father's house? Let me go, Bucklaw! He shall account to me, or, by Heaven, I will stab him where he stands!"

"You shall not touch him here," said Bucklaw; "he once gave me my life, and were he the devil come to fly away with the whole house and generation, he shall have nothing but fair play."

The passions of the two young men thus counteracting each other gave Ravenswood leisure to exclaim, in a stern and steady voice, "Silence!—let him who really seeks danger take

the fitting time when it is to be found; my mission here will be shortly accomplished. Is *that* your handwriting, madam?" he added in a softer tone, extending towards Miss Ashton her last letter.

A faltering "Yes" seemed rather to escape from her lips than to be uttered as a voluntary answer.

"And is *this* also your handwriting?" extending towards her the mutual engagement.

Lucy remained silent. Terror, and a yet stronger and more confused feeling, so utterly disturbed her understanding that she probably scarcely comprehended the question that was put to her.

"If you design," said Sir William Ashton, "to found any legal claim on that paper, sir, do not expect to receive any answer to an extrajudicial question."

"Sir William Ashton," said Ravenswood, "I pray you, and all who hear me, that you will not mistake my purpose. If this young lady, of her own free will, desires the restoration of this contract, as her letter would seem to imply, there is not a withered leaf which this autumn wind strews on the heath that is more valueless in my eyes. But I must and will hear the truth from her own mouth; without this satisfaction I will not leave this spot. Murder me by numbers you possibly may; but I am an armed man—I am a desperate man, and I will not die without ample vengeance. This is my resolution, take it as you may. I WILL hear her determination from her own mouth; from her own mouth, alone, and without witnesses, will I hear it. Now, choose," he said, drawing his sword with the right hand, and, with the left, by the same motion taking a pistol from his belt and cocking it, but turning the point of one weapon and the muzzle of the other to the ground—"choose if you will have this hall floated with blood, or if you will grant me the decisive interview with my affianced bride which the laws of God and the country alike entitle me to demand."

All recoiled at the sound of his voice and the determined action by which it was accompanied; for the ecstasy of real desperation seldom fails to overpower the less energetic passions by which it may be opposed. The clergyman was the first to speak. "In the name of God," he said, "receive an overture of peace from the meanest of His servants. What this honorable person demands, albeit it is urged with over violence, hath yet in it something of reason. Let him hear from Miss Lucy's own lips that she hath dutifully acceded to the will of her parents, and repenteth her of her

covenant with him; and when he is assured of this he will depart in peace unto his own dwelling, and cumber us no more. Alas! the workings of the ancient Adam are strong even in the regenerate; surely we should have long-suffering with those who, being yet in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity, are swept forward by the uncontrollable current of worldly passion. Let, then, the Master of Ravenswood have the interview on which he insisteth; it can but be as a passing pang to this honorable maiden, since her faith is now irrevocably pledged to the choice of her parents. Let it, I say, be thus: it belongeth to my functions to entreat your honors' compliance with this healing overture."

"Never!" answered Lady Ashton, whose rage had now overcome her first surprise and horror—"never shall this man speak in private with my daughter, the affianced bride of another! Pass from this room who will, I remain here. I fear neither his violence nor his weapons, though some," she said, glancing a look towards Colonel Ashton, "who bear my name appear more moved by them."

"For God's sake, madam," answered the worthy divine, "add not fuel to firebrands. The Master of Ravenswood cannot, I am sure, object to your presence, the young lady's state of health being considered, and your maternal duty. I myself will also tarry; peradventure my gray hairs may turn away wrath."

"You are welcome to do so, sir," said Ravenswood; "and Lady Ashton is also welcome to remain, if she shall think proper; but let all others depart."

"Ravenswood," said Colonel Ashton, crossing him as he went out, "you shall account for this ere long."

"When you please," replied Ravenswood.

"But I," said Bucklaw with a half smile, "have a prior demand on your leisure, a claim of some standing."

"Arrange it as you will," said Ravenswood; "leave me but this day in peace, and I will have no dearer employment on earth to-morrow than to give you all the satisfaction you can desire."

The other gentlemen left the apartment; but Sir William Ashton lingered.

"Master of Ravenswood," he said, in a conciliating tone, "I think I have not deserved that you should make this scandal and outrage in my family. If you will sheathe your sword, and retire with me into my study, I will prove to you, by the most satisfactory arguments, the inutility of your present irregular procedure——"

"To-morrow, sir—to-morrow—to-morrow, I will hear you at length," reiterated Ravenswood, interrupting him; "this day hath its own sacred and indispensable business."

He pointed to the door, and Sir William left the apartment.

Ravenswood sheathed his sword, uncocked and returned his pistol to his belt; walked deliberately to the door of the apartment, which he bolted; returned, raised his hat from his forehead, and, gazing upon Lucy with eyes in which an expression of sorrow overcame their late fierceness, spread his dishevelled locks back from his face, and said, "Do you know me, Miss Ashton? I am still Edgar Ravenswood." She was silent, and he went on with increasing vehemence—"I am still that Edgar Ravenswood who, for your affection, renounced the dear ties by which injured honor bound him to seek vengeance. I am that Ravenswood who, for your sake, forgave, nay, clasped hands in friendship with, the oppressor and pillager of his house, the traducer and murderer of his father."

"My daughter," answered Lady Ashton, interrupting him, "has no occasion to dispute the identity of your person; the venom of your present language is sufficient to remind her that she speaks with the mortal enemy of her father."

"I pray you to be patient, madam," answered Ravenswood; "my answer must come from her own lips. Once more, Miss Lucy Ashton, I am that Ravenswood to whom you granted the solemn engagement which you now desire to retract and cancel."

Lucy's bloodless lips could only falter out the words, "It was my mother."

"She speaks truly," said Lady Ashton, "it *was* I who, authorized alike by the laws of God and man, advised her, and concurred with her, to set aside an unhappy and precipitate engagement, and to annul it by the authority of Scripture itself."

"Scripture!" said Ravenswood, scornfully.

"Let him hear the text," said Lady Ashton, appealing to the divine, "on which you yourself, with cautious reluctance, declared the nullity of the pretended engagement insisted upon by this violent man."

The clergyman took his clasped Bible from his pocket, and read the following words: "If a woman vow a vow unto the Lord, and bind herself by a bond, being in her father's house in her youth, and her father hear her vow, and her bond wherewith she hath bound her soul, and her father shall hold

his peace at her ; then all her vows shall stand, and every vow wherewith she hath bound her soul shall stand."

"And was it not even so with us ?" interrupted Ravenswood.

"Control thy impatience, young man," answered the divine, "and hear what follows in the sacred text: 'But if her father disallow her in the day that he heareth, not any of her vows, or of her bonds wherewith she hath bound her soul, shall stand ; and the Lord shall forgive her, because her father disallowed her.'"

"And was not," said Lady Ashton, fiercely and triumphantly breaking in—"was not ours the case stated in the Holy Writ ? Will this person deny, that the instant her parents heard of the vow, or bond, by which our daughter had bound her soul, we disallowed the same in the most express terms, and informed him by writing of our determination ?"

"And is this all ?" said Ravenswood, looking at Lucy. "Are you willing to barter sworn faith, the exercise of free will, and the feelings of mutual affection to this wretched hypocritical sophistry ?"

"Hear him !" said Lady Ashton, looking to the clergyman—"hear the blasphemer !"

"May God forgive him," said Bide-the-Bent, "and enlighten his ignorance !"

"Hear what I have sacrificed for you," said Ravenswood, still addressing Lucy, "ere you sanction what has been done in your name. The honor of an ancient family, the urgent advice of my best friends, have been in vain used to sway my resolution ; neither the arguments of reason nor the portents of superstition have shaken my fidelity. The very dead have arisen to warn me, and their warning has been despised. Are you prepared to pierce my heart for its fidelity with the very weapon which my rash confidence intrusted to your grasp ?"

"Master of Ravenswood," said Lady Ashton, "you have asked what questions you thought fit. You see the total incapacity of my daughter to answer you. But I will reply for her, and in a manner which you cannot dispute. You desire to know whether Lucy Ashton, of her own free will, desires to annul the engagement into which she has been trepanned. You have her letter under her own hand, demanding the surrender of it; and, in yet more full evidence of her purpose, here is the contract which she has this morning subscribed, in presence of this reverend gentleman, with Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw."

Ravenswood gazed upon the deed as if petrified. "And

it was without fraud or compulsion," said he, looking towards the clergyman, "that Miss Ashton subscribed this parchment?"

"I vouch it upon my sacred character."

"This is indeed, madam, an undeniable piece of evidence," said Ravenswood, sternly; "and it will be equally unnecessary and dishonorable to waste another word in useless remonstrance or reproach. There, madam," he said, laying down before Lucy the signed paper and the broken piece of gold—"there are the evidences of your first engagement; may you be more faithful to that which you have just formed. I will trouble you to return the corresponding tokens of my ill-placed confidence; I ought rather to say, of my egregious folly."

Lucy returned the scornful glance of her lover with a gaze from which perception seemed to have been banished; yet she seemed partly to have understood his meaning, for she raised her hands as if to undo a blue ribbon which she wore around her neck. She was unable to accomplish her purpose, but Lady Ashton cut the ribbon asunder, and detached the broken piece of gold, which Miss Ashton had till then worn concealed in her bosom; the written counterpart of the lovers' engagement she for some time had had in her own possession. With a haughty courtesy, she delivered both to Ravenswood, who was much softened when he took the piece of gold.

"And she could wear it thus," he said, speaking to himself—"could wear it in her very bosom—could wear it next to her heart—even when—— But complaint avails not," he said, dashing from his eye the tear which had gathered in it, and resuming the stern composure of his manner. He strode to the chimney, and threw into the fire the paper and piece of gold, stamping upon the coals, with the heel of his boot, as if to insure their destruction. "I will be no longer," he then said, "an intruder here. Your evil wishes, and your worse offices, Lady Ashton, I will only return by hoping these will be your last machinations against your daughter's honor and happiness. And to you, madam," he said, addressing Lucy, "I have nothing farther to say, except to pray to God that you may not become a world's wonder for this act of wilful and deliberate perjury." Having uttered these words, he turned on his heel and left the apartment.

Sir William Ashton, by entreaty and authority, had detained his son and Bucklaw in a distant part of the castle, in order to prevent their again meeting with Ravenswood; but

as the Master descended the great staircase, Lockhard delivered him a billet, signed "Sholto Douglas Ashton," requesting to know where the Master of Ravenswood would be heard of four or five days from hence, as the writer had business of weight to settle with him, so soon as an important family event had taken place.

"Tell Colonel Ashton," said Ravenswood, composedly, "I shall be found at Wolf's Crag when his leisure serves him."

As he descended the outward stair which led from the terrace, he was a second time interrupted by Craigengelt, who, on the part of his principal, the Laird of Bucklaw, expressed a hope that Ravenswood would not leave Scotland within ten days at least, as he had both former and recent civilities for which to express his gratitude.

"Tell your master," said Ravenswood, fiercely, "to choose his own time. He will find me at Wolf's Crag, if his purpose is not forestalled."

"*My* master!" replied Craigengelt, encouraged by seeing Colonel Ashton and Bucklaw at the bottom of the terrace. "Give me leave to say I know of no such person upon earth, nor will I permit such language to be used to me!"

"Seek your master, then, in hell!" exclaimed Ravenswood, giving way to the passion he had hitherto restrained, and throwing Craigengelt from him with such violence that he rolled down the steps and lay senseless at the foot of them. "I am a fool," he instantly added, "to vent my passion upon a caitiff so worthless."

He then mounted his horse, which at his arrival he had secured to a balustrade in front of the castle, rode very slowly past Bucklaw and Colonel Ashton, raising his hat as he passed each, and looking in their faces steadily while he offered this mute salutation, which was returned by both with the same stern gravity. Ravenswood walked on with equal deliberation until he reached the head of the avenue, as if to show that he rather courted than avoided interruption. When he had passed the upper gate, he turned his horse, and looked at the castle with a fixed eye; then set spurs to his good steed, and departed with the speed of a demon dismissed by the exorcist.

CHAPTER XXXIV

Who comes from the bridal chamber?
It is Azrael, the angel of death.

Thalaba.

AFTER the dreadful scene that had taken place at the castle, Lucy was transported to her own chamber, where she remained for some time in a state of absolute stupor. Yet afterwards, in the course of the ensuing day, she seemed to have recovered, not merely her spirits and resolution, but a sort of flighty levity, that was foreign to her character and situation, and which was at times checkered by fits of deep silence and melancholy, and of capricious pettishness. Lady Ashton became much alarmed, and consulted the family physicians. But as her pulse indicated no change, they could only say that the disease was on the spirits, and recommended gentle exercise and amusement. Miss Ashton never alluded to what had passed in the state-room. It seemed doubtful even if she was conscious of it, for she was often observed to raise her hands to her neck, as if in search of the ribbon that had been taken from it, and mutter, in surprise and discontent, when she could not find it, "It was the link that bound me to life."

Notwithstanding all these remarkable symptoms, Lady Ashton was too deeply pledged to delay her daughter's marriage even in her present state of health. It cost her much trouble to keep up the fair side of appearances towards Bucklaw. She was well aware, that if he once saw any reluctance on her daughter's part, he would break off the treaty, to her great personal shame and dishonor. She therefore resolved that, if Lucy continued passive, the marriage should take place upon the day that had been previously fixed, trusting that a change of place, of situation, and of character would operate a more speedy and effectual cure upon the unsettled spirits of her daughter than could be attained by the slow measures which the medical men recommended. Sir William Ashton's views of family aggrandizement, and his desire to strengthen himself against the measures of the Marquis of A——, readily induced him to acquiesce in what he could not have perhaps

resisted if willing to do so. As for the young men, Bucklaw and Colonel Ashton, they protested that, after what had happened, it would be most dishonorable to postpone for a single hour the time appointed for the marriage, as it would be generally ascribed to their being intimidated by the intrusive visit and threats of Ravenswood.

Bucklaw would indeed have been incapable of such precipitation, had he been aware of the state of Miss Ashton's health, or rather of her mind. But custom, upon these occasions, permitted only brief and sparing intercourse between the bridegroom and the betrothed, a circumstance so well improved by Lady Ashton, that Bucklaw neither saw nor suspected the real state of the health and feelings of his unhappy bride.

On the eve of the bridal day, Lucy appeared to have one of her fits of levity, and surveyed with a degree of girlish interest the various preparations of dress, etc., etc., which the different members of the family had prepared for the occasion.

The morning dawned bright and cheerily. The bridal guests assembled in gallant troops from distant quarters. Not only the relations of Sir William Ashton, and the still more dignified connections of his lady, together with the numerous kinsmen and allies of the bridegroom, were present upon this joyful ceremony, gallantly mounted, arrayed, and caparisoned, but almost every Presbyterian family of distinction within fifty miles made a point of attendance upon an occasion which was considered as giving a sort of triumph over the Marquis of A——, in the person of his kinsman. Splendid refreshments awaited the guests on their arrival, and after these were finished, the cry was "To horse." The bride was led forth betwixt her brother Henry and her mother. Her gayety of the preceding day had given rise [place] to a deep shade of melancholy, which, however, did not misbecome an occasion so momentous. There was a light in her eyes and a color in her cheek which had not been kindled for many a day, and which, joined to her great beauty, and the splendor of her dress, occasioned her entrance to be greeted with a universal murmur of applause, in which even the ladies could not refrain from joining. While the cavalcade were getting to horse, Sir William Ashton, a man of peace and of form, censured his son Henry for having begirt himself with a military sword of preposterous length, belonging to his brother, Colonel Ashton.

"If you must have a weapon," he said, "upon such a

peaceful occasion, why did you not use the short poniard sent from Edinburgh on purpose ?"

The boy vindicated himself by saying it was lost.

"You put it out of the way yourself, I suppose," said his father, "out of ambition to wear that preposterous thing, which might have served Sir William Wallace. But never mind, get to horse now, and take care of your sister."

The boy did so, and was placed in the centre of the gallant train. At the time, he was too full of his own appearance, his sword, his laced cloak, his feathered hat, and his managed horse, to pay much regard to anything else ; but he afterwards remembered to the hour of his death, that when the hand of his sister, by which she supported herself on the pillion behind him, touched his own, it felt as wet and cold as sepulchral marble.

Glancing wide over hill and dale, the fair bridal procession at last reached the parish church, which they nearly filled ; for, besides domestics, above a hundred gentlemen and ladies were present upon the occasion. The marriage ceremony was performed according to the rites of the Presbyterian persuasion, to which Bucklaw of late had judged it proper to conform.

On the outside of the church, a liberal dole was distributed to the poor of the neighboring parishes, under the direction of Johnie Mortheuch [Mortsheugh], who had lately been promoted from his desolate quarters at the Hermitage to fill the more eligible situation of sexton at the parish church of Ravenswood. Dame Gourlay, with two of her contemporaries, the same who assisted at Alice's late-wake, seated apart upon a flat monument, or "through-stane," sat enviously comparing the shares which had been allotted to them in dividing the dole.

"Johnie Mortheuch," said Annie Winnie, "might hae minded auld lang syne, and thought of his auld kimmers, for as braw as he is with his new black coat. I hae gotten but five herring instead o' sax, and this disna look like a gude saxpennys, and I dare say this bit morsel o' beef is an unce lighter than ony that's been dealt round ; and it's a bit o' the tenony hough, mair by token that yours, Maggie, is out o' the back-sey."

"Mine, quoth she !" mumbled the paralytic hag—"mine is half banes, I trow. If grit folk gie poor bodies onything for coming to their weddings and burials, it suld be something that wad do them gude, I think."

"Their gifts," said Ailsie Gourlay, "are dealt for nae

love of us, nor out of respect for whether we feed or starve. They wad gie us whinstanes for loaves, if it would serve their ain vanity, and yet they expect us to be as gratefu', as they ca' it, as if they served us for true love and liking."

"And that's truly said," answered her companion.

"But, Ailsie Gourlay, ye're the auldest o' us three—did ye ever see a mair grand bridal."

"I winna say that I have," answered the hag; "but I think soon to see as braw a burial."

"And that wad please me as weel," said Annie Winnie; "for there's as large a dole, and folk are no obliged to girn and laugh, and mak murgeons, and wish joy to these hellicat quality, that lord it ower us like brute beasts. I like to pack the dead-dole in my lap, and rin ower my auld rhyme—

"'My loaf in my lap, my penny in my purse,
Thou art ne'er the better, and I'm ne'er the worse.'"*

"That's right, Annie," said the paralytic woman; "God send us a green Yule and a fat kirkyard!"

"But I wad like to ken, Luckie Gourlay, for ye're the auldest and wisest amang us, whilk o' these revellers' turn it will be to be streikit first?"

"D'ye see yon dandilly maiden," said Dame Gourlay, "a' glistenin' wi' gowd and jewels, that they are lifting up on the white horse behind that hare-brained callant in scarlet, wi' the lang sword at his side?"

"But that's the bride!" said her companion, her cold heart touched with some sort of compassion—"that's the very bride hersell! Eh, whow! sae young, sae braw, and sae bonny—and is her time sae short?"

"I tell ye," said the sibyl, "her winding sheet is up as high as her throat already, believe it wha list. Her sand has but few grains to rin out; and nae wonder—they've been weel shaken. The leaves are withering fast on the trees, but she'll never see the Martinmas wind gar them dance in swirls like the fairy rings."

"Ye waited on her for a quarter," said the paralytic woman, "and got twa red pieces, or I am far beguiled?"

"Ay, ay," answered Ailsie, with a bitter grin; "and Sir William Ashton promised me a bonny red gown to the boot o' that—a stake, and a chain, and a tar-barrel, lass! what think ye o' that for a propine?—for being up early and doun late for fourscore nights and mair wi' his dwining daughter. But he may keep it for his ain leddy, cummers."

* See Curing by Charms. Note 11.

"I hae heard a sough," said Annie Winnie, "as if Leddy Ashton was nae canny body."

"D'ye see her yonder," said Dame Gourlay, as she prances on her gray gelding out at the kirkyard? There's mair o' utter deevilry in that woman, as brave and fair-fashioned as she rides yonder, than in a' the Scotch witches that ever flew by moonlight ower North Berwick Law."

"What's that ye say about witches, ye damned hags?" said Johnie Mortheuch [Mortsheugh]; "are ye casting yer cantrips in the very kirkyard, to mischieve the bride and bridegroom? Get awa' hame, for if I tak my souple t'ye, I'll gar ye find the road faster than ye wad like."

"Hegh, sirs!" answered Ailsie Gourlay; "how bra' are we wi' our new black coat and our weel-pouthered head, as if we had never kenned hunger nor thirst oursells! and we'll be screwing up our bit fiddle, doubtless, in the ha' the night, amang a' the other elbow-jiggers for miles round. Let's see if the pins haud, Johnie—that's a', lad."

"I take ye a' to witness, gude people," said Mortheuch, "that she threatens me wi' mischief, and forespeaks me. If onything but gude happens to me or my fiddle this night, I'll make it the blackest night's job she ever stirred in. I'll hae her before presbytery and synod: I'm half a minister mysell, now that I'm a bedral in an inhabited parish."

Although the mutual hatred betwixt these hags and the rest of mankind had steeled their hearts against all impressions of festivity, this was by no means the case with the multitude at large. The splendor of the bridal retinue, the gay dresses, the spirited horses, the blithesome appearance of the handsome women and gallant gentlemen assembled upon the occasion, had the usual effect upon the minds of the populace. The repeated shouts of "Ashton and Bucklaw forever!" the discharge of pistols, guns, and musketoons, to give what was called the bridal shot, evinced the interest the people took in the occasion of the cavalcade, as they accompanied it upon their return to the castle. If there was here and there an elder peasant or his wife who sneered at the pomp of the upstart family, and remembered the days of the long-descended Ravenswoods, even they, attracted by the plentiful cheer which the castle that day afforded to rich and poor, held their way thither, and acknowledged, notwithstanding their prejudices, the influence of *l'Amphitrion où l'on dîne.*

Thus accompanied with the attendance both of rich and poor, Lucy returned to her father's house. Bucklaw used

his privilege of riding next to the bride, but, new to such a situation, rather endeavored to attract attention by the display of his person and horsemanship, than by any attempt to address her in private. They reached the castle in safety, amid a thousand joyous acclamations.

It is well known that the weddings of ancient days were celebrated with a festive publicity rejected by the delicacy of modern times. The marriage guests, on the present occasion, were regaled with a banquet of unbounded profusion, the relics of which, after the domestics had feasted in their turn, were distributed among the shouting crowd, with as many barrels of ale as made the hilarity without correspond to that within the castle. The gentlemen, according to the fashion of the times, indulged, for the most part, in deep draughts of the richest wines, while the ladies, prepared for the ball which always closed a bridal entertainment, impatiently expected their arrival in the state gallery. At length the social party broke up at a late hour, and the gentlemen crowded into the saloon, where, enlivened by wine and the joyful occasion, they laid aside their swords and handed their impatient partners to the floor. The music already rang from the gallery, along the fretted roof of the ancient state apartment. According to strict etiquette, the bride ought to have opened the ball; but Lady Ashton, making an apology on account of her daughter's health, offered her own hand to Bucklaw as substitute for her daughter's.

But as Lady Ashton raised her head gracefully, expecting the strain at which she was to begin the dance, she was so much struck by an unexpected alteration in the ornaments of the apartment that she was surprised into an exclamation—"Who has dared to change the pictures?"

All looked up, and those who knew the usual state of the apartment observed, with surprise, that the picture of Sir William Ashton's father was removed from its place, and in its stead that of old Sir Malise Ravenswood seemed to frown wrath and vengeance upon the party assembled below. The exchange must have been made while the apartments were empty, but had not been observed until the torches and lights in the sconces were kindled for the ball. The haughty and heated spirits of the gentlemen led them to demand an immediate inquiry into the cause of what they deemed an affront to their host and to themselves; but Lady Ashton, recovering herself, passed it over as the freak of a crazy wench who was maintained about the castle, and whose susceptible imagination had been observed to be much affected

by the stories which Dame Gourlay delighted to tell concerning "the former family," so Lady Ashton named the Ravenswoods. The obnoxious picture was immediately removed, and the ball was opened by Lady Ashton, with a grace and dignity which supplied the charms of youth, and almost verified the extravagant encomiums of the elder part of the company, who extolled her performance as far exceeding the dancing of the rising generation.

When Lady Ashton sat down, she was not surprised to find that her daughter had left the apartment, and she herself followed, eager to obviate any impression which might have been made upon her nerves by an incident so likely to affect them as the mysterious transposition of the portraits. Apparently she found her apprehensions groundless, for she returned in about an hour, and whispered the bridegroom, who extricated himself from the dancers, and vanished from the apartment. The instruments now played their loudest strains; the dancers pursued their exercise with all the enthusiasm inspired by youth, mirth, and high spirits, when a cry was heard so shrill and piercing as at once to arrest the dance and the music. All stood motionless; but when the yell was again repeated, Colonel Ashton snatched a torch from the sconce, and demanding the key of the bridal-chamber from Henry, to whom, as bride's-man, it had been intrusted, rushed thither, followed by Sir William and Lady Ashton, and one or two others, near relations of the family. The bridal guests waited their return in stupefied amazement.

Arrived at the door of the apartment, Colonel Ashton knocked and called, but received no answer except stifled groans. He hesitated no longer to open the door of the apartment, in which he found opposition from something which lay against it. When he had succeeded in opening it, the body of the bridegroom was found lying on the threshold of the bridal chamber, and all around was flooded with blood. A cry of surprise and horror was raised by all present; and the company, excited by this new alarm, began to rush tumultuously towards the sleeping apartment. Colonel Ashton, first whispering to his mother—"Search for her; she has murdered him!" drew his sword, planted himself in the passage, and declared he would suffer no man to pass excepting the clergyman and a medical person present. By their assistance, Bucklaw, who still breathed, was raised from the ground, and transported to another apartment, where his friends, full of suspicion and murmuring, assembled round him to learn the opinion of the surgeon.

In the mean while, Lady Ashton, her husband, and their assistants in vain sought Lucy in the bridal bed and in the chamber. There was no private passage from the room, and they began to think that she must have thrown herself from the window, when one of the company, holding his torch lower than the rest, discovered something white in the corner of the great old-fashioned chimney of the apartment. Here they found the unfortunate girl seated, or rather couched like a hare upon its form—her head-gear dishevelled, her night-clothes torn and dabbled with blood, her eyes glazed, and her features convulsed into a wild paroxysm of insanity. When she saw herself discovered, she gibbered, made mouths, and pointed at them with her bloody fingers, with the frantic gestures of an exulting demoniac.

Female assistance was now hastily summoned; the unhappy bride was overpowered, not without the use of some force. As they carried her over the threshold, she looked down, and uttered the only articulate words that she had yet spoken, saying, with a sort of grinning exultation—"So, you have ta'en up your bonny bridegroom?" She was, by the shuddering assistants, conveyed to another and more retired apartment, where she was secured as her situation required, and closely watched. The unutterable agony of the parents, the horror and confusion of all who were in the castle, the fury of contending passions between the friends of the different parties—passions augmented by previous intemperance—surpass description.

The surgeon was the first who obtained something like a patient hearing; he pronounced that the wound of Bucklaw, though severe and dangerous, was by no means fatal, but might readily be rendered so by disturbance and hasty removal. This silenced the numerous party of Bucklaw's friends, who had previously insisted that he should, at all rates, be transported from the castle to the nearest of their houses. They still demanded, however, that, in consideration of what had happened, four of their number should remain to watch over the sick-bed of their friend, and that a suitable number of their domestics, well armed, should also remain in the castle. This condition being acceded to on the part of Colonel Ashton and his father, the rest of the bridegroom's friends left the castle, notwithstanding the hour and the darkness of the night. The cares of the medical man were next employed in behalf of Miss Ashton, whom he pronounced to be in a very dangerous state. Farther medical assistance was immediately summoned. All night she remained delirious.

On the morning, she fell into a state of absolute insensibility. The next evening, the physicians said, would be the crisis of her malady. It proved so; for although she awoke from her trance with some appearance of calmness, and suffered her night-clothes to be changed, or put in order, yet so soon as she put her hand to her neck, as if to search for the fatal blue ribbon, a tide of recollection seemed to rush upon her, which her mind and body were alike incapable of bearing. Convulsion followed convulsion, till they closed in death, without her being able to utter a word explanatory of the fatal scene.

The provincial judge of the district arrived the day after the young lady had expired, and executed, though with all possible delicacy to the afflicted family, the painful duty of inquiring into this fatal transaction. But there occurred nothing to explain the general hypothesis that the bride, in a sudden fit of insanity, had stabbed the bridegroom at the threshold of the apartment. The fatal weapon was found in the chamber smeared with blood. It was the same poniard which Henry should have worn on the wedding-day, and which his unhappy sister had probably contrived to secrete on the preceding evening, when it had been shown to her among other articles of preparation for the wedding.

The friends of Bucklaw expected that on his recovery he would throw some light upon this dark story, and eagerly pressed him with inquiries, which for some time he evaded under pretext of weakness. When, however, he had been transported to his own house, and was considered as in a state of convalescence, he assembled those persons, both male and female, who had considered themselves as entitled to press him on this subject, and returned them thanks for the interest they had exhibited in his behalf, and their offers of adherence and support. "I wish you all," he said, "my friends, to understand, however, that I have neither story to tell nor injuries to avenge. If a lady shall question me henceforward upon the incidents of that unhappy night, I shall remain silent, and in future consider her as one who has shown herself desirous to break off her friendship with me; in a word, I will never speak to her again. But if a gentleman shall ask me the same question, I shall regard the incivility as equivalent to an invitation to meet him in the Duke's Walk,* and I expect that he will rule himself accordingly."

A declaration so decisive admitted no commentary; and it was soon after seen that Bucklaw had arisen from the bed of sickness a sadder and a wiser man than he had hitherto

* See Note 12.

shown himself. He dismissed Craigengelt from his society, but not without such a provision as, if well employed, might secure him against indigence and against temptation.

Bucklaw afterwards went abroad, and never returned to Scotland; nor was he known ever to hint at the circumstances attending his fatal marriage. By many readers this may be deemed overstrained, romantic, and composed by the wild imagination of an author desirous of gratifying the popular appetite for the horrible; but those who are read in the private family history of Scotland during the period in which the scene is laid, will readily discover, through the disguise of borrowed names and added incidents, the leading particulars of AN OWER TRUE TALE.

CHAPTER XXXV

Whose mind's so marbled, and his heart so hard,
That would not, when this huge mishap was heard,
To th' utmost note of sorrow set their song,
To see a gallant, with so great a grace,
So suddenly unthought on, so o'erthrown,
And so to perish, in so poor a place,
By too rash riding in a ground unknown!

POEM, IN NISBET'S *Heraldry*, vol. ii.

WE have anticipated the course of time to mention Bucklaw's recovery and fate, that we might not interrupt the detail of events which succeeded the funeral of the unfortunate Lucy Ashton. This melancholy ceremony was performed in the misty dawn of an autumnal morning, with such moderate attendance and ceremony as could not possibly be dispensed with. A very few of the nearest relations attended her body to the same churchyard to which she had so lately been led as a bride, with as little free will, perhaps, as could be now testified by her lifeless and passive remains. An aisle adjacent to the church had been fitted up by Sir William Ashton as a family cemetery; and here, in a coffin bearing neither name nor date, were consigned to dust the remains of what was once lovely, beautiful, and innocent, though exasperated to frenzy by a long tract of unremitting persecution.

While the mourners were busy in the vault, the three village hags, who, notwithstanding the unwonted earliness of the hour, had snuffed the carrion like vultures, were seated on the "through-stane," and engaged in their wonted unhallowed conference.

"Did not I say," said Dame Gourlay, "that the braw bridal would be followed by as braw a funeral?"

"I think," answered Dame Winnie, "there's little bravery at it: neither meat nor drink, and just a wheen silver tippences to the poor folk; it was little worth while to come sae far road for sae sma' profit, and us sae frail."

"Out, wretch!" replied Dame Gourlay, "can a' the dainties they could gie us be half sae sweet as this hour's vengeance? There they are that were capering on their prancing

nags four days since, and they are now ganging as dreigh and sober as oursells the day. They were a' glistening wi' gowd and silver; they're now as black as the crook. And Miss Lucy Ashton, that grudged when an honest woman came near her—a taid may sit on her coffin the day, and she can never scunner when he croaks. And Lady Ashton has hell-fire burning in her breast by this time; and Sir William, wi' his gibbets, and his faggots, and his chains, how likes he the witcheries of his ain dwelling-house?"

"And is it true, then," mumbled the paralytic wretch, "that the bride was trailed out of her bed and up the chimley by evil spirits, and that the bridegroom's face was wrung round ahint him?"

"Ye needna care wha did it, or how it was done," said Ailsie Gourlay; "but I'll uphauld it for nae stickit job, and that the lairds and leddies ken weel this day."

"And was it true," said Annie Winnie, "sin ye ken sae muckle about it, that the picture of auld Sir Malise Ravenswood came down on the ha' floor, and led out the brawl before them a'?"

"Na," said Ailsie; "but into the ha' came the picture—and I ken weel how it came there—to gie them a warning that pride wad get a fa'. But there's as queer a ploy, cummers, as ony o' thae, that's gaun on even now in the burial vault yonder: ye saw twall mourners, wi' crape and cloak, gang down the steps pair and pair?"

"What should ail us to see them?" said the one old woman.

"I counted them," said the other, with the eagerness of a person to whom the spectacle had afforded too much interest to be viewed with indifference.

"But ye did not see," said Ailsie, exulting in her superior observation, "that there's a thirteenth amang them that they ken naething about; and, if auld freits say true, there's ane o' that company that'll no be lang for this warld. But come awa', cummers; if we bide here, I'se warrant we get the wyte o' whatever ill comes of it, and that gude will come of it nane o' them need ever think to see."

And thus, croaking like the ravens when they anticipate pestilence, the ill-boding sibyls withdrew from the churchyard.

In fact, the mourners, when the service of interment was ended, discovered that there was among them one more than the invited number, and the remark was communicated in whispers to each other. The suspicion fell upon a figure

which, muffled in the same deep mourning with the others, was reclined, almost in a state of insensibility, against one of the pillars of the sepulchral vault. The relatives of the Ashton family were expressing in whispers their surprise and displeasure at the intrusion, when they were interrupted by Colonel Ashton, who, in his father's absence, acted as principal mourner. "I know," he said in a whisper, "who this person is; he has, or shall soon have, as deep cause of mourning as ourselves; leave me to deal with him, and do not disturb the ceremony by unnecessary exposure." So saying, he separated himself from the group of his relations, and taking the unknown mourner by the cloak, he said to him, in a tone of suppressed emotion, "Follow me."

The stranger, as if starting from a trance at the sound of his voice, mechanically obeyed, and they ascended the broken ruinous stair which led from the sepulchre into the churchyard. The other mourners followed, but remained grouped together at the door of the vault, watching with anxiety the motions of Colonel Ashton and the stranger, who now appeared to be in close conference beneath the shade of a yew-tree, in the most remote part of the burial-ground.

To this sequestered spot Colonel Ashton had guided the stranger, and then turning round, addressed him in a stern and composed tone. "I cannot doubt that I speak to the Master of Ravenswood?" No answer was returned. "I cannot doubt," resumed the Colonel, trembling with rising passion, "that I speak to the murderer of my sister?"

"You have named me but too truly," said Ravenswood, in a hollow and tremulous voice.

"If you repent what you have done," said the Colonel, "may your penitence avail you before God; with me it shall serve you nothing. Here," he said, giving a paper, "is the measure of my sword, and a memorandum of the time and place of meeting. Sunrise to-morrow morning, on the links to the east of Wolf's Hope."

The Master of Ravenswood held the paper in his hand, and seemed irresolute. At length he spoke—"Do not," he said, "urge to farther desperation a wretch who is already desperate. Enjoy your life while you can, and let me seek my death from another."

"That you never, never shall!" said Douglas Ashton. "You shall die by my hand, or you shall complete the ruin of my family by taking my life. If you refuse my open challenge, there is no advantage I will not take of you, no indignity with which I will not load you, until the very name

of Ravenswood shall be the sign of everything that is dishonorable, as it is already of all that is villanous."

"That it shall never be," said Ravenswood, fiercely; "if I am the last who must bear it, I owe it to those who once owned it that the name shall be extinguished without infamy. I accept your challenge, time, and place of meeting. We meet, I presume, alone?"

"Alone we meet," said Colonel Ashton, "and alone will the survivor of us return from that place of rendezvous."

"Then God have mercy on the soul of him who falls!" said Ravenswood.

"So be it!" said Colonel Ashton; "so far can my charity reach even for the man I hate most deadly, and with the deepest reason. Now, break off, for we shall be interrupted. The links by the sea-shore to the east of Wolf's Hope; the hour, sunrise; our swords our only weapons."

"Enough," said the Master, "I will not fail you."

They separated; Colonel Ashton joining the rest of the mourners, and the Master of Ravenswood taking his horse, which was tied to a tree behind the church. Colonel Ashton returned to the castle with the funeral guests, but found a pretext for detaching himself from them in the evening, when, changing his dress to a riding-habit, he rode to Wolf's Hope that night, and took up his abode in the little inn, in order that he might be ready for his rendezvous in the morning.

It is not known how the Master of Ravenswood disposed of the rest of that unhappy day. Late at night, however, he arrived at Wolf's Crag, and aroused his old domestic, Caleb Balderstone, who had ceased to expect his return. Confused and flying rumors of the late tragical death of Miss Ashton, and of its mysterious cause, had already reached the old man, who was filled with the utmost anxiety, on account of the probable effect these events might produce upon the mind of his master.

The conduct of Ravenswood did not alleviate his apprehensions. To the butler's trembling entreaties that he would take some refreshment, he at first returned no answer, and then suddenly and fiercely demanding wine, he drank, contrary to his habits, a very large draught. Seeing that his master would eat nothing, the old man affectionately entreated that he would permit him to light him to his chamber. It was not until the request was three or four times repeated that Ravenswood made a mute sign of compliance. But when Balderstone conducted him to an apartment

which had been comfortably fitted up, and which, since his return, he had usually occupied, Ravenswood stopped short on the threshold.

"Not here," said he, sternly; "show me the room in which my father died; the room in which SHE slept the night they were at the castle."

"Who, sir?" said Caleb, too terrified to preserve his presence of mind.

"*She*, Lucy Ashton! Would you kill me, old man, by forcing me to repeat her name?"

Caleb would have said something of the disrepair of the chamber, but was silenced by the irritable impatience which was expressed in his master's countenance; he lighted the way trembling and in silence, placed the lamp on the table of the deserted room, and was about to attempt some arrangement of the bed, when his master bid him begone in a tone that admitted of no delay. The old man retired, not to rest, but to prayer; and from time to time crept to the door of the apartment, in order to find out whether Ravenswood had gone to repose. His measured heavy step upon the floor was only interrupted by deep groans; and the repeated stamps of the heel of his heavy boot intimated too clearly that the wretched inmate was abandoning himself at such moments to paroxysms of uncontrolled agony. The old man thought that the morning, for which he longed, would never have dawned; but time, whose course rolls on with equal current, however it may seem more rapid or more slow to mortal apprehension, brought the dawn at last, and spread a ruddy light on the broad verge of the glistening ocean. It was early in November, and the weather was serene for the season of the year. But an easterly wind had prevailed during the night, and the advancing tide rolled nearer than usual to the foot of the crags on which the castle was founded.

With the first peep of light, Balderstone again resorted to the door of Ravenswood's sleeping apartment, through a chink of which he observed him engaged in measuring the length of two or three swords which lay in a closet adjoining to the apartment. He muttered to himself, as he selected one of these weapons—"It is shorter: let him have this advantage, as he has every other."

Caleb Balderstone knew too well, from what he witnessed, upon what enterprise his master was bound, and how vain all interference on his part must necessarily prove. He had but time to retreat from the door, so nearly was he surprised by his master suddenly coming out and descending to the

stables. The faithful domestic followed ; and, from the dishevelled appearance of his master's dress, and his ghastly looks, was confirmed in his conjecture that he had passed the night without sleep or repose. He found him busily engaged in saddling his horse, a service from which Caleb, though with faltering voice and trembling hands, offered to relieve him. Ravenswood rejected his assistance by a mute sign, and having led the animal into the court, was just about to mount him, when the old domestic's fear giving way to the strong attachment which was the principal passion of his mind, he flung himself suddenly at Ravenswood's feet, and clasped his knees, while he exclaimed, "Oh, sir! oh, master! kill me if you will, but do not go out on this dreadful errand! Oh! my dear master, wait but this day; the Marquis of A—— comes to-morrow, and a' will be remedied."

"You have no longer a master, Caleb," said Ravenswood, endeavoring to extricate himself; "why, old man, would you cling to a falling tower?"

"But I *have* a master," cried Caleb, still holding him fast, "while the heir of Ravenswood breathes. I am but a servant; but I was born your father's—your grandfather's servant. I was born for the family—I have lived for them—I would die for them! Stay but at home, and all will be well!"

"Well, fool! well?" said Ravenswood. "Vain old man, nothing hereafter in life will be well with me, and happiest is the hour that shall soonest close it!"

So saying, he extricated himself from the old man's hold, threw himself on his horse, and rode out at the gate; but instantly turning back, he threw towards Caleb, who hastened to meet him, a heavy purse of gold.

"Caleb!" he said, with a ghastly smile, "I make you my executor;" and again turning his bridle, he resumed his course down the hill.

The gold fell unheeded on the pavement, for the old man ran to observe the course which was taken by his master, who turned to the left down a small and broken path, which gained the sea-shore through a cleft in the rock, and led to a sort of cove where, in former times, the boats of the castle were wont to be moored. Observing him take this course, Caleb hastened to the eastern battlement, which commanded the prospect of the whole sands, very near as far as Wolf's Hope. He could easily see his master riding in that direction, as fast as the horse could carry him. The prophecy at

once rushed on Balderstone's mind, that the Lord of Ravenswood should perish on the Kelpie's flow, which lay half-way betwixt the Tower and the links, or sand knolls, to the northward of Wolf's Hope. He saw him accordingly reach the fatal spot; but he never saw him pass farther.

Colonel Ashton, frantic for revenge, was already in the field, pacing the turf with eagerness, and looking with impatience towards the Tower for the arrival of his antagonist. The sun had now risen, and showed its broad disc above the eastern sea, so that he could easily discern the horseman who rode towards him with speed which argued impatience equal to his own. At once the figure became invisible, as if it had melted into the air. He rubbed his eyes, as if he had witnessed an apparition, and then hastened to the spot, near which he was met by Balderstone, who came from the opposite direction. No trace whatever of horse or rider could be discerned; it only appeared that the late winds and high tides had greatly extended the usual bounds of the quicksand, and that the unfortunate horseman, as appeared from the hoof-tracks, in his precipitate haste, had not attended to keep on the firm sands on the foot of the rock, but had taken the shortest and most dangerous course. One only vestige of his fate appeared. A large sable feather had been detached from his hat, and the rippling waves of the rising tide wafted it to Caleb's feet. The old man took it up, dried it, and placed it in his bosom.

The inhabitants of Wolf's Hope were now alarmed, and crowded to the place, some on shore, and some in boats, but their search availed nothing. The tenacious depths of the quicksand, as is usual in such cases, retained its prey.

Our tale draws to a conclusion. The Marquis of A——, alarmed at the frightful reports that were current, and anxious for his kinsman's safety, arrived on the subsequent day to mourn his loss; and, after renewing in vain a search for the body, returned, to forget what had happened amid the bustle of politics and state affairs.

Not so Caleb Balderstone. If worldly profit could have consoled the old man, his age was better provided for than his earlier years had ever been; but life had lost to him its salt and its savor. His whole course of ideas, his feelings, whether of pride or of apprehension, of pleasure or of pain, had all arisen from his close connection with the family which was now extinguished. He held up his head no longer, for-

sook all his usual haunts and occupations, and seemed only to find pleasure in moping about those apartments in the old castle which the Master of Ravenswood had last inhabited. He ate without refreshment, and slumbered without repose; and, with a fidelity sometimes displayed by the canine race, but seldom by human beings, he pined and died within a year after the catastrophe which we have narrated.

The family of Ashton did not long survive that of Ravenswood. Sir William Ashton outlived his eldest son, the Colonel, who was slain in a duel in Flanders; and Henry, by whom he was succeeded, died unmarried. Lady Ashton lived to the verge of extreme old age, the only survivor of the group of unhappy persons whose misfortunes were owing to her implacability. That she might internally feel compunction, and reconcile herself with Heaven, whom she had offended, we will not, and we dare not, deny; but to those around her she did not evince the slightest symptom either of repentance or remorse. In all external appearance she bore the same bold, haughty, unbending character which she had displayed before these unhappy events. A splendid marble monument records her name, titles, and virtues, while her victims remain undistinguished by tomb or epitaph.

NOTES TO THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR

NOTE 1.—THE FAMILY OF STAIR, p. ix

[It may be regretted that the Author had not adhered to his original purpose as here stated. In his Introduction to the Chronicles of the Canongate, when referring to the sources or materials of his novels, he says, "I may mention, for example's sake, that the terrible catastrophe of the Bride of Lammermoor actually occurred in a Scottish family of rank. . . . It is unnecessary farther to withdraw the real veil from this scene of family distress, nor, although it occurred more than a hundred years since, might it be altogether agreeable to the representatives of the families concerned in the narrative. It may be proper to say, that the events are imitated; but I had neither the means nor intention of copying the manners, or tracing the characters, of the persons concerned in the real story."

The regret, however, is not in his stating that the tragical event said to have happened in the family of Dalrymple of Stair in 1669 had suggested the catastrophe, but in seemingly connecting the story itself with the history of that family, by quoting so fully the scandal and satirical verses of a later period.—Laing.]

NOTE 2.—SIR G. LOCKHART, p. 37

President of the Court of Session. He was pistolled in the High Street of Edinburgh, by John Chiesley of Dalry, in the year 1689. The revenge of this desperate man was stimulated by an opinion that he had sustained injustice in a decreet-arbitral pronounced by the President, assigning an alimentary provision of about £93 in favor of his wife and children. He is said at first to have designed to shoot the judge while attending upon divine worship, but was diverted by some feeling concerning the sanctity of the place. After the congregation was dismissed. he dogged his victim as far as the head of the close, on the south side of the Lawnmarket, in which the President's house was situated, and shot him dead as he was about to enter it. This act was done in the presence of numerous spectators. The assassin made no attempt to fly, but boasted of the deed, saying, "I have taught the President how to do justice." He had at least given him fair warning, as Jack Cade says on a similar occasion. The murderer, after undergoing the torture, by a special act of the Estates of Parliament, was tried before the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, as high sheriff, and condemned to be dragged on a hurdle to the place of execution, to have his right hand struck off while he yet lived, and, finally, to be hung on the gallows with the pistol wherewith he shot the President tied around his neck. This execution took place on the 3d of April, 1689; and the incident was long remembered as a dreadful instance of what the law books call the perfervidum ingenium Scotorum.

NOTE 3.—THE BALLANTYNES, p. 79

James Ballantyne, the eminent printer, was the eldest of three sons of a small merchant in Kelso. He was born in 1772, and became acquainted with Sir Walter Scott so early as 1784, when attending the grammar school. Having established a printing office, he started a local newspaper, called the Kelso Mail; and in 1799 there issued from his press Scott's Apology for Tales of Terror, of which only twelve copies were thrown off. This was followed by the first edition of the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border in 1802, a work that was considered such an admirable specimen of typography that Ballantyne was induced to remove to Edinburgh, where for thirty years he carried on a printing establishment with great success, leaving his younger brother Alexander at Kelso to look after the newspaper.

John Ballantyne, the second son, was born in 1774. He commenced his career at Kelso, in September, 1813, by the sale of that portion of the celebrated library of John Duke of Roxburghe which remained at Fleurs Castle. On coming to Edinburgh, he was for a time connected with the printing office; but afterwards turned auctioneer and bookseller, and became the publisher of several of Scott's Poems and Novels. "Jocund Johnny," as Scott sometimes called him, was a person of volatile and joyous disposition, a most amusing companion, having the credit of being the best story-teller of his time. The state of his health, however, obliged him to relinquish business, and he died 16th June, 1821.

James, who devoted much of his time to theatrical criticism and journalism, died within four months of Sir Walter Scott, in January, 1833. He assisted the Author of these novels in revising the proof sheets and suggested minute corrections (Laing).

NOTE 4.—GEORGE BUCHANAN'S JESTS, p. 107

Referring probably to a popular chap-book, entitled The Witty and Entertaining Exploits of George Buchanan, who was commonly called the King's Fool; the whole six parts complete, 1781. This character was jester to Charles I., and must not be mistaken for his learned namesake (Laing).

NOTE 5.—RAID OF CALEB BALDERSTONE, p. 128

The raid of Caleb Balderstone on the cooper's kitchen has been universally considered on the southern side of the Tweed as grotesquely and absurdly extravagant. The Author can only say that a similar anecdote was communicated to him, with date and names of the parties, by a noble earl lately deceased, whose remembrances of former days, both in Scotland and England, while they were given with a felicity and power of humor never to be forgotten by those who had the happiness of meeting his lordship in familiar society, were especially invaluable from their extreme accuracy.

Speaking after my kind and lamented informer, with the omission of names only, the anecdote ran thus: There was a certain bachelor gentleman in one of the midland counties of Scotland, second son of an ancient family, who lived on the fortune of a second son, videlicet, upon some miserably small annuity, which yet was so managed and stretched out by the expedients of his man John that his master kept the front rank with all the young men of quality in the county, and hunted, dined, diced and drank with them upon apparently equal terms.

It is true that, as the master's society was extremely amusing, his friends contrived to reconcile his man John to accept assistance of various kinds "under the rose," which they dared not to have directly offered to his master. Yet, very consistently with all this good inclination to John and John's master, it was thought among the young fox-hunters that it would be an excellent jest, if possible, to take John at fault.

With this intention, and, I think, in consequence of a bet, a party of four or five of these youngsters arrived at the bachelor's little

mansion, which was adjacent to a considerable village. Here they alighted a short while before the dinner hour—for it was judged regular to give John's ingenuity a fair start—and, rushing past the astonished domestic, entered the little parlor; and, telling some concerted story of the cause of their invasion, the self-invited guests asked their landlord if he could let them have some dinner. Their friend gave them a hearty and unembarrassed reception, and, for the matter of dinner, referred them to John. He was summoned accordingly; received his master's orders to get dinner ready for the party who had thus unexpectedly arrived, and, without changing a muscle of his countenance, promised prompt obedience. Great was the speculation of the visitors, and probably of the landlord also, what was to be the issue of John's fair promises. Some of the more curious had taken a peep into the kitchen, and could see nothing there to realize the prospect held out by the major-domo. But, punctual as the dinner-hour struck on the village clock, John placed before them a stately rump of boiled beef, with a proper accompaniment of greens, amply sufficient to dine the whole party and to decide the bet against those among the visitors who expected to take John napping. The explanation was the same as in the case of Caleb Balderstone. John had used the freedom to carry off the kale-pot of a rich old chuff in the village and brought it to his master's house, leaving the proprietor and his friends to dine on bread and cheese; and as John said, "good enough for them." The fear of giving offense to so may persons of distinction kept the poor man sufficiently quiet, and he was afterward remunerated by some indirect patronage, so that the jest was admitted a good one on all sides. In England, at any period, or in some parts of Scotland at the present day, it might not have passed off so well.

NOTE 6.—ANCIENT HOSPITALITY, p. 132

It was once the universal custom to place ale, wine or some strong liquor in the chamber of an honored guest to assuage his thirst should he feel any on awakening in the night, which, considering that the hospitality of that period often reaches excess, was by no means unlikely. The author has met some instances of it in former days and in old-fashioned families. It was, perhaps, no poetic fiction that records how

> My cummer and I lay down to sleep
> With two pint-stoups at our bed-feet;
> And aye when we waken'd we drank them dry
> What think you o' my cummer and I?

It is a current story in Teviotdale that in the house of an ancient family of distinction, much addicted to the Presbyterian cause a Bible was always put into the sleeping apartment of the guests, along with a bottle of strong ale. On some occasion there was a meeting of clergymen in the vicinity of the castle, all of whom were invited to dinner by the worthy baronet, and several abode all night. According to the fashion of the times, seven of the reverend guests were allotted to one large barrack-room, which was used on such occasions of extended hospitality. The butler took care that the divines were presented, according to custom, each with a Bible and a bottle of ale. But after a little consultation among themselves they are said to have recalled the domestic as he was leaving the apartment. "My friend," said one of the venerable guests, "you must know when we meet together as brethren the youngest minister reads aloud a portion of Scripture to the rest; only one Bible, therefore, is necessary; take away the other six and in their place bring six more bottles of ale."

This synod would have suited the "hermit sage" of Johnson, who answered a pupil who inquired for the real road to happiness with the celebrated line,

> Come, my lad, and drink some beer!

NOTE 7.—APPEAL TO PARLIAMENT, p. 146

The power of appeal from the Court of Sessions, the supreme Judges of Scotland, to the Scottish Parliament, in case of civil right,

was fiercely debated before the Union. It was a privilege highly desirable for the subject, as the examination and occasional reversal of their sentences in Parliament might serve as a check upon the judges, which they greatly required at a time when they were much more distinguished for legal knowledge than for uprightness and integrity.

The members of the Faculty of Advocates (so the Scottish barristers are termed), in the year 1674, incurred the violent displeasure of the Court of Sessions, on account of their refusal to renounce the right of appeal to Parliament; and, by a very arbitrary procedure, the majority of the number were banished from Edinburgh, and consequently deprived of their professional practice, for several sessions or terms. But, by the articles of the Union, an appeal to the British House of Peers has been secured to the Scottish subject, and that right has, no doubt, had its influence in forming the impartial and independent character which, much contrary to the practice of their predecessors, the Judges of the Court of Session have since displayed.

It is easy to conceive that an old lawyer like the Lord Keeper in the text should feel alarm at the judgments given in his favor, upon grounds of strict penal law, being brought to appeal under a new and dreaded procedure in a court eminently impartial, and peculiarly moved by considerations of equity.

In earlier editions of this work [before 1829-33] this legal distinction was not sufficiently explained..

NOTE 8.—POOR-MAN-OF-MUTTON, p. 168

The blade-bone of a shoulder of mutton is called in Scotland "a poor man," as in some parts of England it is termed "a poor knight of Windsor;" in contrast, it must be presumed, to the baronial Sir Loin. It is said that, in the last age, an old Scottish peer, whose conditions (none of the most gentle) were marked by a a strange and fierce-looking exaggeration of the Highland countenance, chanced to be indisposed while he was in London attending Parliament. The master of the hotel where he lodged, anxious to show attention to his noble guest, waited on him to enumerate the contents of his well-stocked larder, so as to endeavor to hit on something which might suit his appetite. "I think, landlord," said his lordship, rising up from his couch, and throwing back the tartan plaid with which he had screened his grim and ferocious visage—"I think I could eat a morsel of a poor man." The landlord fled in terror, having no doubt that his guest was a cannibal, who might be in the habit of eating a slice of a tenant as light food when he was under regimen.

NOTE 9.—MIDDLETON'S "MAD WORLD," p. 199

Hereupon I, Jedediah Cleishbotham, crave leave to remark primo, which signifies, in the first place that, having in vain inquired at the circulating library in Gandercleugh, albeit it aboundeth in similar vanities, for this samyn Middleton and his "Mad World," it was at length shown unto me amongst other ancient fooleries carefully compiled by one Dodsley,* who, doubtless, hath his reward for neglect of precious time; and having misused so much of mine as was necessary for the purpose, I therein found that a play-man is brought in as a footman, whom a knight is made to greet facetiously with the epithet of "linen stocking, and threescore miles a-day."

Secundo, which is secondly in the vernacular, under Mr. Pattieson's favour, some men not altogether so old as he would represent them, do remember this species of menial, or forerunner. In evidence of which I, Jedediah Cleishbotham, though mine eyes yet do me good service, remember me to have seen one of this tribe clothed in white, and bearing a staff, who ran daily before the stage-coach of the umquhile John Earl of Hopeton, father of this earl, Charles, that now is; unto whom, it may be justly said, that renown playeth the part of a running footman, or precursor; and, as the poet singeth—

Mars standing by asserts his quarrel,
And Fame flies after with a laurel,

*See Dodsley's Collection of Old Plays, vol. v., p. 307 (Laing).

NOTE 10.—TRUMPETER MARINE AT SHERIFFMUIR, p. 223

The battle of Sheriffmuir, which took place in November, 1715, was claimed as a victory by both sides. This gave rise to a clever popular song printed at the time as a broadside, under the title of A Race at Sheriffmuir, fairly run on the 15th November, 1715, to the tune of "The Horseman's Sport."

There's some say that we wan, some say that they wan,
Some say that nane wan at a', man:
But one thing I'm sure, that at Sheriffmuir
A battle there was, which I saw, man.
And we ran, and they ran, and they ran, and we ran,
And we ran, and they ran awa', man.

In these satirical verses Trumpeter Marine is introduced, and in proof of Sir Walter's accuracy as to the name, the following note may be added, as recent editors of this ballad have altered it to Maclean:

In the Present State of Great Britain, London, 1710, Francis Marine is second on the list of Queen Anne's Trumpeters for Scotland, while in the volume for 1716 his name occurs among the officers of the king's household, as "Francis Marine, Sen.," and there is added as fifth trumpeter, "Francis Marine, Jun." These household trumpeters were employed, as they are to this day in the Lyon Office, for announcing royal proclamations, and attending the Circuit Courts of Justiciary. Another son or grandson, named James Marine, continues to appear as trumpeter down to 1785.

The words referred to, in the original ballad of Sheriffmuir, are as follow:

And Trumpet Marine too, whose breeks were not clean, through
Misfortune he happen'd to fa', man:
By saving his neck, his trumpet did break,
Came off without musick at a', man.
And we ran, and they ran, etc.

No doubt there was a John Maclean, trumpeter, sent on a message from the rebels to the Duke of Argyle before the battle, but the modern improvers have spoiled the verses both as to ryhme and accuracy; while they have overlooked the description of the trumpeter's dress, which would evidently indicate his not being a Highlander (Laing).

NOTE 11.—CURING BY CHARMS, p. 291

Reginald Scott tells of an old woman who performed so many cures by means of a charm that she was suspected of witchcraft. Her mode of practice being inquired into, it was found that the only fee which she would accept of was a loaf of bread and a silver penny; and that the potent charm with which she wrought so many cures was the doggerel couplet in the text.

NOTE 12.—DUKE'S WALK, p. 296

A walk in the vicinity of Holyrood House, so-called because often frequented by the Duke of York, afterwards James II., during his residence in Scotland. It was for a long time the usual place of rendezvous for settling affairs of honor.

GLOSSARY

OF

WORDS, PHRASES AND ALLUSIONS

ABEE, alone
ABOON, ABUNE, above,
ABLEEZE, in a blaze up
ABOU HASSAN. See The Arabian Nights: "The Sleeper Awakened"
ADJUDICATION, an action for seizing upon a heritable estate as security for a debt—a Scots law term
AD RE - AEDIFICANDAM (p. 91), to set up an ancient house again
AE, one
AGE, to act as may be necessary and legal—a Scots law term
AIL, to interfere with, prevent
AIN, own
AIRT, to direct, turn; a point
AITS, oats; AIT-CAKE, oat-cake
AIVER, or AVER, an old broken-winded horse
ALEXANDER, a tragedy by Nathaniel Lee, very popular in the early part of the 18th century
ALLENARLY, solely, alone
ANCE, once
ANDREW FERRARA, a Highland broadsword
ANGUS, EARL OF, presumably Archibald, sixth earl, exiled by James V. in 1528
AROINT, avaunt
ASS, ash
AULD REEKIE, Edinburgh
AVA, at all
AWE, to owe
AVANT-COURIER, a forerunner, messenger sent on in advance

BACK-SEY, the sirloin
BACKSWORD, a sword with only one cutting edge
BARD OF HOPE, Thomas Campbell, author of Pleasures of Hope
BASS, a conspicuous mass of rock in the Firth of Forth, not far from North Berwick
BAWBEE, a halfpenny
BEDESMAN, an almsman, one that prays for another
BEDRAL, a beadle, sexton
BEFLUMM, to befool, cajole
BELL THE CAT, synonymous with "Beard the lion in his den." The phrase originated among the Scottish nobles who conspired to ruin James III.'s favorite, Cochran. See Scott's Tales of a Grandfather, chap. xxii.
BENDED, cocked
BEND-LEATHER, thick leather for boot soles
BERWICK, DUKE OF, James Fitz-James, the natural son King James II. of England, was made a marshal of France
BICKER, a wooden drinking-cup
BICKERING (FIRE) flickering, quivering
BIDE, to wait, stay
BIGGONET, a linen cap, coif
BIRKIE, a lively little fellow; the game of beggar-my-neighbor
BIRLING, drinking in company
BIT AND THE BUFFET, sustenance with hard usage
BLACKAVISED, black-visaged
BLACK-JACK, a large waxed pitcher for holding ale
BLACKNESS, a castle, and formerly a state prison, situated on the Firth of Forth, Linlithgowshire
BLITHE, cheerful, happy, pleased
BOGLE, a bogie, ghost
BOTHWELL BRIG. See Old Mortality, chaps. xxxi. and xxxii.
BOUK, a body, carcass, bulk of body
BOUL, a handle
BOUROCK, a mound, barrow, heap of earth; a miserable hut
BRACH, a hunting-hound
BRAE, a hill; BRAESIDE, a hillside
BRANDER, to broil, grill
BRAW, brave, fine
BRAWL, a French dance, cotillion
BRENT, straight and smooth
BREWIS, the scum caused by boiling
BREWSTER, a brewer
BRIDE IN, taken to the bridal chamber
BROCHE, a roasting-spit
BRUCE TO KILL A SPIDER, an allusion to the story of Robert Bruce and the spider
BUSK, to deck, bind up

CABAGE, to cut off a deer's head behind the horns
CABRACH, or BUCK OF CABRACH, a mountain near the western boundary of Aberdeenshire
CADGY, cheerful, sportive
CAICKLING, cackling, laughing

CALLANT, a young lad
CAMPAIGN OF——. See Spanish generals
CAMPVERE, or CAMPHIRE, a small Dutch town on the island of Walcheren, where from 1444 to 1795 the Scots had a privileged trading factory
CANNON-BIT, a smooth round bit for horses
CANNY, careful, shrewd, useful; (in the negative) peculiar, possessed
CANTABIT VACUUS, he may sing before thieves who has empty pockets —Juvenal xi., 22
CANTRIPS, tricks, spells, incantations
CANTY, cheerful, merry
CAPOT, to win all the tricks in picquet, a form of exclamation
CARBONADE, to broil, grill
CARCAKE, a small cake eaten on Shrove Tuesday
CARLE, a fellow
CARLINE, an old woman, jade
CAST O', kind of
CASTOR, a fur hat
CAUGHT IN THE MANNER, caught in a criminal act
CAULD BE MY CAST, cold be my fate or lot
CAVESSON, a horse's noseband
CEDANT ARMA TOGAE, let arms give place to the insignia of peace
CHAMBER OF DAIS, the best bedroom, kept for guests of consideration
CHANGE A LEG. In the old coaching days inside passengers changed legs with the consent of their opposite neighbor
CHANGE-HOUSE, an inn
CHAPPIN, a liquid measure=1 quart
CHAPPIT, struck (of a clock)
CHATEAU QUI PARLE, etc. (p. 183), when a fortress parleys and a lady listens, both are on the point of surrendering
CHAUMER, a chamber
CHEEK OF THE CHIMNEY NOOK, the fireside, chimney-corner
CHIELD, a fellow
CIRCUS OF ROME. See Green and blue chariots
CLAVERING, chattering, talkative
CLAVERS, idle talk, gossip
CLAVER'SE, John Grahame of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee
CLAW UP YOUR MITTENS, to finish you, give you the coup de grace
CLOCKIN HEN, a sitting hen
COCKERNONY, a topknot
COG, to empty or pour out
COGGING, quibbling, deceiving, cheating
COLDINGHAME ABBEY, or rather Priory, founded by King Edgar in the last years of the 11th century, a few miles from Eyemouth, on the coast of Berwickshire
COMMONTY, right of pasture on the commons
COMPT AND RECKONING, a Scots law process enforcing settlement of accounts
CONDICTIO INDEBITI, a claim for recovering a sum that has been paid when it was not due
CONSCRIPT FATHERS, the title given to the senators of ancient Rome
COOKIE, a Scotch bun
COPPER CAPTAIN, a counterfeit captain. See Beaumont and Fletcher's Rule a wife and have a wife
CORDERY, MR., a name suggested by Corderius, the teacher of Calvin, and author of a book of Latin dialogues once extensively used in schools
COUPE-GORGE, cutthroat
COUTEAU, a hunting-knife
CRACKS, gossip, boasting
CRIMP, to kidnap
CRITIC, a play by Sheridan
CROOK, a chain for suspending a pot in old fireplaces
CROWDY a thick pottage made of oatmeal
CUITLE, to diddle, get by cheating
CUL DE LAMPE, a pictorial ornament, tailpiece
CULLION, a poltroon
CUMBERNAULD, the seat of the ancient family of Fleming (Lord Elphinstone), situated 15 miles northeast of Glasgow
CUMMER, a gossip or friend
CUTTY, short

DAFFING, frolicking, larking, fun
DAFT, crazy
DAIS. See Chamber of dais
DANDILLY, noted for beauty
DANG, drove, knocked
DEAD-DEAL, the board on which a dead body is stretched
DEBITUM FUNDI, a real burden on the estate
DECORE, to decorate; DECOREMENTS, decorations
DEMELE, an encounter, altercation
DEMI-SAKER, a light fieldpiece, small cannon
DENTIER, more dainty
DIET-LOAF, sweet cake
DIGITO MONSTRARI, to be pointed at with the finger
DING, to knock, drive, beat
DINK, trim, neat
DIRGIE, a funeral entertainment
DIRK, a dagger
DISNA, does not
DISPONE UPON, bestowed upon
DITTAY, an indictment, accusation
DOITED, dotard, stupid
DON GAYFEROS, a nephew of the chivalric Roland, and one of the Twelve Peers of Charlemagne
DONNART, stupid
DOO, a dove, pigeon
DOUR, stubborn
DRAP-DE-BERRY, a cloth made at Berri in France
DREIGH, slow, lingering
DRIBBLE, a drop
DROUTHY, dry
DRUCKEN, drunk
DRUMLANRIG, the ancient seat of the Queensberry family (now belongs to that of Buccleuch), on the Nith, Parish of Durisdeer, Dumfriesshire
DUNDEE, John Grahame of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee, a supporter of the Stuarts
DUNG, knocked, driven
DUNSH, to nudge
DWINING, declining, pining away

EARTH (of a badger), a hole
EAST LOTHIAN, another name for Haddingtonshire

EATCHE, adze
EBB, shallow
ECLAIRCISSEMENT, explanation
EE, an eye; EEN, eyes
EGERIA, the nymph who used to meet King Numa Pompilius in a grove near Rome
ELBOW-JIGGER, a fiddler
ELFLAND, fairyland
ENEUCH, enough
EXIES, hysterics
EXPIRY OF THE LEGAL, the expiration of the period in which an estate seized by adjudication (q. v) may be redeemed
EYAS, a hawk brought up from the nest

FACTOR, a steward
FAILYIE, to fail
FASH, to trouble
FECKLESS, feeble, silly
FELL, terrible; a hide, skin
FEUAR, a Scotch leaseholder; FEU - RIGHTS, absolute rights of property, in return for the payment of a trifling sum annually
FIDUS ACHATES, faithful companion
FIT, the foot
FLAM, FLAN, or FLAWN, a kind of custard
FLANKARD, the side of the lower part of the abdomen
FLIGHTERING, transient
FLISK, a caper, whim
FLORENTINE, a kind of pie
FLYTE, to scold, storm in anger
FOG, moss
FORBYE, besides
FORDUN, JOHN OF, an early Scottish chronicler of the 14th century
FORESPEAK, to bewitch, presage evil of
FORGATHER, to come together, meet one another
FOU, a bushel
FOUL THIEF, the devil
FOUND, to go, depend
FOY, an entertainment given by friends to one who is about to leave them for good
FRACTIOUS, rebellious, difficult to deal with
FREIT, an omen
FREMD, strange
FROGS, an ornamental fastening of a coat or mantle, generally a long button and a loop
FUGITATION, a criminal's fleeing from justice—a Scots law term
FURNISHES (DEER'S), presumably droppings; hence track

GABERLUNZIE, a beggar, mendicant
GAE, to go
GAISLING, a gosling
GALLOWAY, a Scotch cob, named from the district of Galloway, where originally bred
GANG, to go; GANE, gone
GAR, to make, oblige
GATE, direction, place, way
GAUGER, an exciseman
GAUNCH, a snatch with the open mouth, bite
GAWSIE, plump, jolly
GEAR, property
GEIZENED, leaky, as a barrel kept too long dry
GEORGIUS, a gold Georgenoble (equals 6s. 8d.), time of Henry VIII., St. George being the device on the obverse
GIF, if
GINES DE PASSAMONTE. See Don Quixote, pt. ii., chap. xxviii., and pt. i., chap. xxii.
GIRD, a hoop
GIRN, to grin
GLAZEN, furnished with glass
GLEDGING, looking askance
GLEED, a spark, flame
GLEEING, squinting
GLENT, to whisk, flash
GLOWER, to gaze, stare
GOB-BOX, the mouth
GOWD, gold
GOWK, a fool; a cuckoo
GOWRIE CONSPIRACY, a mysterious attempt to assassinate James VI. of Scotland by Lord Ruthven and his brother, the Earl of Gowrie, in 1600
GRAHAME TO WEAR GREEN. The Marquis of Montrose, a Grahame, was driven to execution in a cart of green alder; fulfilling an old prophecy—"Visa la fin [Montrose's motto], On an ouler [alder] tree green, Shall by many be seen"
GRAITH, furniture
GRAVAMINOUS, serious, important
GRAYBEARD, a stone jar for holding ale or liquor
GREEN AND BLUE CHARIOTS. In the reign of Justinian, emperor of the Eastern Empire, the rivalries of the blue and green charioteers, who raced in the circus at Byzantium, developed into political factions powerful enough to seriously disturb the state
GREET, to weep
GROGRAM, a coarse textile fabric
GRUND-MAIL, rent for the ground
GUDEMAN, the head of the house, the husband
GUDESIRE, a grandfather
GUDEWIFE, a wife, as head of her house, landlady
GUIDES, managers, guiders; GUIDING, treating, behaving to
GUSTING THEIR GABS, tickling their palates
GUY OF WARWICK, the hero of an Early English romance, one of whose feats was to overcome a famous Dun Cow on Dunsmore Heath, near Warwick

HACKSTOUN OF RATHILLET, a fanatical Cameronian, one of the murderers of Archbishop Sharp of St. Andrews in 1679
HAGGIS, a Scotch pudding of minced meat, mixed with oat-meal, suet, onions, etc., boiled in a skin bag
HAILL AND FEIR, whole and sound, complete and entire
HALE, HAILL, whole
HALF-FOU, half-bushel
HAMILTON, on the Clyd Lanarkshire, the prin pal seat of the du family of Hamilton. wild cattle still through the exte parks
HARLED, dragged
HATTED KIT, a sour or curdled D
HAUD, to hold e-
OUT, to prese wig
arm
HEATHER-CO[illegible] up
or tuft of h[illegible] this
HEEZY, a ho[illegible]ed in
HEIR OF
old ballad - may-
Percy's F
HELLICAT, etc.,
care [illegible]ae to Dr.
HELL [illegible] idea is
the pl[illegible]eral writ-
John[illegible]orge Her-
comm[illegible]a Pruden-
ers:
bert MARIA,
[illegible]tort of Charles
H[illegible]ighter of Hen-
France

HERMIT SAGE OF JOHNSON, Dr. Johnson's parody on a poem by T. Warton. See Boswell's Life, under year 1777
HOPE, BARD OF, Thomas Campbell, author of Pleasures of Hope
HOUGH, a thigh, ham
HOUSEWIFESKEP, housewifery
HOW, a hollow
HUMLOCK, a hemlock
HYKE A TALBOT, etc. (p. 87), hunting terms and names borrowed from Dame Juliana Berner's Treatise of Hawking, Hunting, etc. (1486)—Book of St. Alban's

ILKA, each, every
ILKA LAND ITS AIN LAUCH, every place its own (law) customs
ILL-CLECKET, ill-hatched
ILL-DEEDY GETT, mischievous urchin
IN FORO CONTENTIOSO, in the law courts
INGAN, an onion
INIMICUS AMICISSIMUS, an enemy is (sometimes) the best of friends
INLAKE, a breach, loss, death
INTER MINORES, between minors
IN TERROREM, as a warning to others
IRISH BRIGADE, a body of troops in the pay of the French King
ITHER, other

OBUS, a gold coin—first issued by es I. of England
a leathern strap round a hawk's
JO
l
JOI sweetheart, dar-
gr URCHILL, the
of lier, the Duke
Ann borough of
JOHN n
newc W-COME, a
JOW, a start
KALL,
YARD, KAIL-
den
KAIN, a age gar-
as of
cheese, e kind,
ant to lan eggs,
KAISER, the ten-
Germany
KEBBUCK, a of
KEEKIT, peepe
KEEP HER
keep her resol
KELPIE, a wate
KEN, to know
KENSPECKLE, c
ous, easily recogn
KIMMER, a gossip,
KINDLY AID, a contribution in kind payable to the landlord by the tenant
KIPPAGE, a rage, dilemma
KIPPER, a dried salmon
KIST, a chest, coffin
KITTLE, to tickle; ticklish
KNOWE, a knoll, eminence

LAMMER, amber
LAMMER LAW, one of the Lammermoor hills, eight miles south of Haddington
L'AMPHITRION OU L'ON DINE, the man who really pays for the dinner. See Plautus, Amphitruo
LANDWARD, in the country, rural
LATE-WAKE, the watch over a dead body
LAUCH, law, customs
LAUNDER, to do laundry work
LAWING, a bill, reckoning
LAW'S SCHEME, a company formed in 1717 by John Law (of Lauriston, near Edinburgh) for developing the resources of Louisiana and the Mississippi valley, which at that time belonged to France
LEE, NATHANIEL, dramatist, went insane through drink, wrote The Rival Queens; or, Alexander the Great (1667), and other plays
LEG, CHANGE A. See Change a leg
LIFT, the sky; to carry off
LINKS, sandy flat ground on sea-coast, dunes
LIPPEN, to trust
LIPPENING WORD, occasional, thoughtless word
LITH, a joint
LOON, a fellow
LOOT, allowed, permitted
LOUPEN, leaped
LOWE, a flame, fire
LUCKIE, mother, a title given to old dames
LUITER CUM PERSONA, etc. (p. 51), he pays with his person who cannot pay with his purse
LUM, a chimney
L'UN N'EMPECHE, etc. (p. 99), the one is no hindrance to the other
LUNYIES, loins
LURDANE, a blockhead

MAIL, tax, rent
MAILING, a small farm
MAIN, a hand at dice, match at cock-fighting
AIR, MAIST, more, most
MAITRE D'ARMES, swordsman, fencing-master
MALLEUS MALIFICARUM (nine editions before 1496), by Kramer and Sprenger, describing the processes against witches
MANSE, a parsonage
MAUN, must
MAUT, malt
MEAL-POKE, a meal-bag
MELTER, a herring full of milt
MEPHIBOSHETH, a character in Dryden's Absalom and Achitopel
MERK—1s. 1 1-3d.
MERSE, Berwickshire
MESSAN, a cur
METALLED (LADS), mettled, full of spirit
MILE, SCOTTISH, nearly nine furlongs
MILL or MULL, a snuff-box
MIRANDA, the heroine of Shakespeare's Tempest
MIRK, dark
MISGIE, to go wrong, fail
MITTENS. See Claw up your mittens
MON DIEU! IL Y EN A DEUX, Good Heavens! there are two of them
MONTERO CAP, a horseman's or huntsman's cap with ear-flaps
MORLAND, GEORGE, a clever English painter, but a man of dissipated habits, who died in 1804
MOSS, a morass, marsh
MOUNTAIN-MAN, a Cameronian, strictest sect of Covenanters
MR. PUFF, a character in Sheridan's Critic
MUCKLE, much
MULL, a snuff-horn
MULTIPLIEPOINDING, a Scots law process, the English interpleader, for settling competing claims to one and the same fund
MURGEONS, mouths, grimaces

NAE, NAEBODY, NAETHING, no, nobody, nothing
NAR, never
NEQUE DIVES, NEQUE, etc. (p. 138), No Scotchman of merit, be he rich, brave, or even wise, will be able to remain long in his country. Envy will drive him out
NEUK, nook, corner
NOMBLES, or NUMBLES, the entrails of a deer
NORTHAMPTON, EARL OF. Henry Howard, younger brother of Thomas, fourth Duke of Norfolk, born 1540, was

prominent during the reigns of Elizabeth and James I.
NORTH BERWICK LAW, a conical hill near North Berwick
NOURICESHIP, the office of nurse
NOWT, black cattle
NUMA, the second of the legendary kings of ancient Rome
NUPTA; DOMUM DUCTA; OBITT; SEPULT; wedded; taken home; died; buried

OFFCOME, an apology, excuse
ORANGE, PRINCE OF. See Spanish generals
OUT-BYE, from home
OVERCROW, to overpower, triumph over
OWERLOOK, to ignore
OXTER, the armpit

PACOLET, a dwarf, owner of a winged horse, in the legend of Valentine and Orson
PAINTING. See Serene and silent art
PAND, a pledge; a bed-curtain
PAROCHINE, a parish
PARVE, NEC INVIDEO, etc. (p. 2), Thou art about to go, but alone, into the busy city, my little book—I grudge thee not thy lot
PAS D'AVANCE, the lead, precedence
PATRIA POTESTAS, paternal authority
PEARLINGS, lace
PEAT, a person of insufferable pride
PEGH, to pant, breathe hard
PETTICOAT-TAIL, a kind of cake baked with butter
PETTY COVER, for petit couvert, a meal not eaten in ceremonious state
PEW, the plaintive cry of certain birds; COULDNA HAE PLAYED PEW, could not have drawn a note from
PICKLE, a small quantity
PICK-MAW, a species of gull
PIG, a stoneware vessel, pitcher
PINE, to pain, punish
PINNYWINKLES, an instrument of torture consisting of a board with holes, into which the fingers were thrust and pressed with screw-pegs
PINT, SCOTCH—3 English pints
PIQUE, REPIQUE, and CAPOT, terms used in the game of picquet
PIRN, a reel
PIT-MIRK, as dark as pitch
PIZE, a term of mild execration
PLACEBO, a sop
PLACK, a small copper coin—1-3 penny
PLISKIE, a prank, trick
PLOY, a merry-making
PLUMDAMAS, for prune de damas, a damask plum, i. e. a damson (tart)
POCK-PUDDING a Scotchman's contemptuous name for an Englishman
POINT, QUINT, and QUATORZE, terms used in the game of picquet
POINT D'APPUI, a support
POINT D'ESPAGNE, a sort of French lace esteemed in Spain in the 17th century
POKE, a bag
POSSO, IN MANNOR WATER, in Peeblesshire
POUTHERED, corned, slightly salted
PRESTER, JOHN, legendary King of Abyssinia
PRETTY MAN, a brave man, athletic and skilled in the use of his weapons
PROPINE, a gift
PUND SCOTS—1s. 8d sterling
PYKE, a pick

QUAIGH, a drinking-cup of hooped staves, ornamented with silver. It held about a pint, and was chiefly used for wine and brandy
QUARTER'S LENGTH, a quarter of a yard
QUEEN, a sprightly young woman, flirt

RAE, roe-deer
RAILLY, or RAIL, a kind of cloak or kerchief for the neck and head
RAVEN-BONE, the spoon-bone of the brisket, thrown by hunters to the ravens, in cutting up the stag
REAVING, thieving
REDD, to clear, tidy
RED WUD, downright mad
REEK, smoke
REESTED, smoke-dried
REMIGIUS, NICOLAUS, or NICHOLAS OF REMY, author of a work on witchcraft (1595)
REPONED, used as a reply
REVERENCE, BACON WITH, bacon with its garnishings or belongings
RIFLER, a hawk that does not return to the lure
RING-WALK, the track of a stag
ROAR YOU AN 'TWERE ANY NIGHTINGALE. See Midsummer Night's Dream, Act i., Sc. 2
ROUND, to whisper
ROUP, an auction
RUDAS, a scolding jade
RUNLET, a barrel, holding 18½ gallons

SAE, so
ST. CLAIR TO CROSS THE ORD ON A MONDAY. The Earl of Orkney, chief of the Sinclairs or St. Clairs, led his men on a Monday over Ord Hill on the way to Flodden, where they all perished to a man
SAINT GERMAINS, near Paris, where James II. held court during his exile
ST. MARGARET, niece of Edward the Confessor and wife of Malcolm Canmore; her day is June 10th
SAIR, sore
SAMYN, same
SANT, a saint
SARABAND, a Spanish dance
SARK, a shirt
SAUL, a soul
SAUMON, a salmon
SAUT, salt
SCART, a scratch
SCAUD, to scald
SCLATE, a slate; SCLATER, a slater
SCOTCH PINT—3 English pints
SCOTTISH MILE, nearly nine furlongs
SCRAUGH, a screech, loud, discordant cry
SCREIGH, to shriek, scream
SCUNNER, to loathe, shudder with aversion
SERENE AND SILENT ART (painting). See Campbell's Stanzas to Painting
SETS, becomes, suits
SEVEN SLEEPERS, martyrs of Ephesus, who, according to the legend, slept in a cave from the reign of the Emperor Decius to that of Theodosius II., a period of 196 years

SEVEN WISE MASTERS, the seven sages of ancient Greece
SHAUGLE, to wear down, shuffle
SHINS TO PINE (punish), e. g. the torture of the boot
SHOT OF, TO BE, to get quit of
SHOVEL-BOARD, a game in which the players strive to shove or drive coins or counters on to certain marks, lines, or squares on the table
SIC, SICCAN, such
SINGLES, the talons of a hawk
SIR EVAN DHU, Sir Even Cameron of Lochiel, a famous Highland chief, and supporter of the Stuarts, fought at Killiecrankie in 1689
SIR JOSHUA, i. e. Sir Joshua Reynolds, the painter
SKIOCH NOCH NA SKLAILL, cut a drink with a tale, i. e. Don't preach over your liquor
SKIEL, to scream
SLIDDERY, slippery
SLOREN, to slake, quench
SNAP, a small gingerbread
SNECKDRAWING, cunning; SNECKDRAWER, an artful, cunning person
SNISHING, SNEESHIN, SNEESHING, snuff
SOOPIT, swept
SOOTHFAST, trusty, honest
SOPITE, to settle, set at rest
SORT, to supply, suit; to give a drubbing
SOUGH, a rumor, whisper; SOUGHED, softly breathed, whispered
SOUP, a sup; mouthful
SOUPLE, a cudgel
SOWENS, a kind of gruel made from the soured siftings of oatmeal
SPAE, to foretell
SPANISH GENERALS AND PRINCE OF ORANGE. William of Orange commanded 20,000 Spaniards in the campaign against France 1554-57
SPEER, to ask, invite, inquire
SPRENGERUS. Jacob Sprenger, joint author of Malleus Malificarum
SPULE-BANE, the shoulder-blade
SPUNK, a spark, match
SPURS, DISH OF. Scott's ancestress, the Flower of Yarrow, is said to have reminded her lord, Auld Wat of Harden, a celebrated Border raider, that the larder was empty, by placing on the table a dish containing a pair of clean spurs—a hint to ride into England. See Lockhart's Life, vol. i., p. 93
STEADING, a farm, farmyard
STEER, to disturb
STICKIT, imperfect, broken down
STOUP, a liquid measure
STOUTHRIEF robbery with violence
STRAE, straw
STRAUGHT, to stretch, make straight
STREIK, to stretch, lay out
SUB JOVE FRIGIDO, in the open air
SUBURB, outlying (district, place)
SUMPH, a blockhead, dunce
SUNE, soon
SURBATED, foot-sore
SUUM CUIQUE TRIBUITO, give to each his own
SWANKING, active, agile
SWAP, a barter, exchange; to strike soundly
SWAUK, a swack, thwack violent blow
SWIRE, a mountain pass
SYBO, a young onion
SYCORAX, a witch, the mother of Caliban, in Shakespeare's Tempest
SYND, to rinse
SYNE, since, ago

TACK, a lease, possession
TAID, a toad
TAIT, a bunch, handful
TAKE ONE'S GAIT, to go one's own way
TAP OF TOW, bunch of tow on the distaff, that readily catches fire
TASS, a glass
TAURIDOR, a bull-fighter
TEIND, a tithe
TENONY, stringy, sinewy
TEUGH, tough
THICKSET, a kind of fustian, resembling velveteen in appearance
THOMAS THE RHYMER, of Ercildoune (Earlston) in Berwickshire, an ancient Scottish poet and prophet, and a favorite legendary hero
"THOU SWEETEST THING," etc. (p.186), from Joanna Baillie's Constantine Paleologus, Act ii., Sc. 2
THOWLESS, inactive, remiss
THRAW, to twist itself, distort itself; a twist
THREEP, KEEP HER. See Keep her threep
THROUGH-STANE, THRUCH-STANE, a flat gravestone
TIMMER, timber; TIMMER BURSE, the exchange of the timber-merchants
TIPPENCE, twopence
TOCHER-GOOD, dowry
TOD, a fox
TOD'S DEN, also called in other passages Tod's Hole, and stated to be 5 to 6 miles from Wolf's Crag*

*A few other irregularities of a similar kind occur in this novel: as Lady Ashton is called Margaret and Eleanor; Girder, John and Gibbie; the sexton, Mortsheugh and Mortheugh

TOKAY, a fiery Hungarian wine
TOLBOOTH, a jail
TONGUE OF THE TRUMP, the part of a jew's-harp that makes the sound; hence the essential or principal person concerned
TOUT, the pet; a fit of ill-temper
TRAPRAIN, or TRAPRAIN LAW, a conspicuous conical hill 4 miles east of Haddington
TREDRILLE, a game of cards played by three persons
TRISTEM, SIR, a knight of the Round Table, famous in the chase
TWA, two
TWAL, twelve; TWAL PENNIES SCOTCH—one penny of English money
TWILT, a quilted bedcover
UMQUHILE, deceased, late
UNA, the heroine of Spenser's Faerie Queene
UNCO, uncommon
VAIK, to be vacant
VERSAILLES, the court of Louis XIV. of France
VIA FACTI, by force
VIRGINALS, an old sort of piano
VISIE, an inspection
VISNOMY, physiognomy, face, features
VIVERS, victuals

WADSET, a mortgage, pledge; WADSETTER, a usurer, mortgagor
WAE, woe; woful, sorry
WAME, belly
WAP, a smart stroke
WARE, to spend, bestow
WARLOCK, a witch
WASTLAND, west country
WAT, to wet
WATER - PURPIE, the brook lime or horse-well grass
WAUR, worse
WEAN, an infant, small child
WEID, a feverish cold
WHAMPLE, a blow
WHEEN, a few
WHIGMALEERIES, fancy toys
WHILES, now and agin
WHIM-WHAM, fancy pastry
WHIN - BUSH, a furze bush
WHINSTANE, greenstone, ragstone
WHITE-HASS, a meat pudding
WHOMBLING, turning upside down
WILLAWINS, woe's me, well-a-day
WILL TO CUPAR MAUN TO CUPAR, a wilful man must have his way
WIN, to make way, get
WIND HIM A PIRN, to cause him trouble, annoyance
WITHIE, the gallows, halter
WON INTO, made way into
YESTREEN, yesternight
YILL, ale
YOWL, to give tongue

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THE SURGEON'S DAUGHTER

First Series

INTRODUCTION

THE tale of *The Surgeon's Daughter* formed part of the Second [First] Series of *Chronicles of the Canongate*, published in 1827; but has been separated from the stories of *The Highland Widow*, etc., which it orginally accompanied, and deferred to the close of the collection, for reasons which printers and publishers will understand, and which would hardly interest the general reader.

The Author has nothing to say now in reference to this little novel, but that the principal incident on which it turns was narrated to him one morning at breakfast by his worthy friend, Mr. Train, of Castle Douglas, in Galloway, whose kind assistance he has so often had occasion to acknowledge in the course of these prefaces; and that the military friend who is alluded to as having furnished him with some information as to Eastern matters was Colonel James Ferguson of Huntly Burn, one of the sons of the venerable historian and philosopher of that name, which name he took the liberty of concealing under its Gaelic form of MacErries.

W. S.

ABBOTSFORD, *Sept.* 1831.

MR. CROFTANGRY'S PREFACE

> Indite, my muse, indite,
> Subpœna'd is thy lyre,
> The praises to requite
> Which rules of court require.
>
> *Probationary Odes.*

THE concluding a literary undertaking, in whole or in part, is, to the inexperienced at least, attended with an irritating titillation, like that which attends on the healing of a wound —a prurient impatience, in short, to know what the world in general, and friends in particular, will say to our labors. Some authors, I am told, profess an oyster-like indifference upon this subject; for my own part, I hardly believe in their sincerity. Others may acquire it from habit; but in my poor opinion a neophyte like myself must be for a long time incapable of such *sang froid.*

Frankly, I was ashamed to feel how childishly I felt on the occasion. No person could have said prettier things than myself upon the importance of stoicism concerning the opinion of others, when their applause or censure refers to literary character only; and I had determined to lay my work before the public with the same unconcern with which the ostrich lays her eggs in the sand, giving herself no farther trouble concerning the incubation, but leaving to the atmosphere to bring forth the young, or otherwise, as the climate shall serve. But, though an ostrich in theory, I became in practise a poor hen, who has no sooner made her deposit but she runs cackling about, to call the attention of every one to the wonderful work which she has performed.

As soon as I became possessed of my first volume, neatly stitched up and boarded, my sense of the necessity of communicating with some one became ungovernable. Janet was inexorable, and seemed already to have tired of my literary confidence; for whenever I drew near the subject, after evading it as long as she could, she made, under some pre-

text or other, a bodily retreat to the kitchen or the cock-loft, her own peculiar and inviolate domains. My publisher would have been a natural resource; but he understands his business too well, and follows it too closely, to desire to enter into literary discussions, wisely considering that he who has to sell books has seldom leisure to read them. Then my acquaintance, now that I have lost Mrs. Bethune Baliol, are of that distant and accidental kind to whom I had not face enough to communicate the nature of my uneasiness, and who probably would only have laughed at me had I made any attempt to interest them in my labors.

Reduced thus to a sort of despair, I thought of my friend and man of business, Mr. Fairscribe. His habits, it was true, were not likely to render him indulgent to light literature, and, indeed, I had more than once noticed his daughters, and especially my little songstress, whip into her reticule what looked very like a circulating library volume, as soon as her father entered the room. Still, he was not only my assured, but almost my only, friend, and I had little doubt that he would take an interest in the volume for the sake of the author which the work itself might fail to inspire. I sent him, therefore, the book, carefully sealed up, with an intimation that I requested the favor of his opinion upon the contents, of which I affected to talk in the depreciatory style which calls for point-blank contradiction, if your correspondent possess a grain of civility.

This communication took place on a Monday, and I daily expected (what I was ashamed to anticipate by volunteering my presence, however sure of a welcome) an invitation to eat an egg, as was my friend's favorite phrase, or a card to drink tea with Misses Fairscribe, or a provocation to breakfast, at least, with my hospitable friend and benefactor, and to talk over the contents of my enclosure. But the hours and days passed on from Monday till Saturday, and I had no acknowledgment whatever that my packet had reached its destination. "This is very unlike my good friend's punctuality," thought I; and having again and again vexed James, my male attendant, by a close examination concerning the time, place, and delivery, I had only to strain my imagination to conceive reasons for my friend's silence. Sometimes I thought that his opinion of the work had proved so unfavorable, that he was averse to hurt my feelings by communicating it; sometimes that, escaping his hands to whom it was destined, it had found its way into his writing-chamber, and was become the subject of criticism to his smart clerks

and conceited apprentices. "'Sdeath!" thought I, "if I were sure of this, I would——"

"And what would you do?" said Reason, after a few moments' reflection. "You are ambitious of introducing your book into every writing and reading chamber in Edinburgh, and yet you take fire at the thoughts of its being criticised by Mr. Fairscribe's young people? Be a little consistent, for shame."

"I will be consistent," said I, doggedly; "but for all that, I will call on Mr. Fairscribe this evening."

I hastened my dinner, donned my greatcoat, for the evening threatened rain, and went to Mr. Fairscribe's house. The old domestic opened the door cautiously, and before I asked the question, said, "Mr. Fairscribe is at home, sir; but it is Sunday night." Recognizing, however, my face and voice, he opened the door wider, admitted me, and conducted me to the parlor, where I found Mr. Fairscribe and the rest of his family engaged in listening to a sermon by the late Mr. Walker of Edinburgh,* which was read by Miss Catherine with unusual distinctness, simplicity, and judgment. Welcomed as a friend of the house, I had nothing for it but to take my seat quietly, and, making a virtue of necessity, endeavor to derive my share of the benefit arising from an excellent sermon. But I am afraid Mr. Walker's force of logic and precision of expression were somewhat lost upon me. I was sensible I had chosen an improper time to disturb Mr. Fairscribe, and when the discourse was ended I rose to take my leave, somewhat hastily, I believe. "A cup of tea, Mr. Croftangry?" said the young lady. "You will wait and take part of a Presbyterian supper?" said Mr. Fairscribe. "Nine o'clock—I make it a point of keeping my father's hours on Sunday at e'en. Perhaps Dr. —— (naming an excellent clergyman) may look in."

I made my apology for declining his invitation; and I fancy my unexpected appearance and hasty retreat had rather surprised my friend, since, instead of accompanying me to the door, he conducted me into his own apartment.

"What is the matter," he said, "Mr. Croftangry? This is not a night for secular business, but if anything sudden or extraordinary has happened——"

"Nothing in the world," said I, forcing myself upon confession, as the best way of clearing myself out of the scrape; "only—only I sent you a little parcel, and as you are so regular

* Robert Walker [1754–83], the colleague and rival of Dr. Hugh Blair [1758–1800], in St. Giles's Church, Edinburgh (*Laing*).

in acknowledging letters and communications, I—I thought it might have miscarried—that's all."

My friend laughed heartily, as if he saw into and enjoyed my motives and my confusion. "Safe! It came safe enough," he said. "The wind of the world always blows its vanities into haven. But this is the end of the session, when I have little time to read anything printed except Inner House papers; yet if you will take your kail with us next Saturday, I will glance over your work, though I am sure I am no competent judge of such matters."

With this promise I was fain to take my leave, not without half persuading myself that, if once the phlegmatic lawyer began my lucubrations, he would not be able to rise from them till he had finished the perusal, nor to endure an interval betwixt his reading the last page and requesting an interview with the author.

No such marks of impatience displayed themselves. Time, blunt or keen, as my friend Joanna says, swift or leisurely, held his course; and on the appointed Saturday I was at the door precisely as it struck four. The dinner hour, indeed, was five punctually, but what did I know but my friend might want half an hour's conversation with me before that time? I was ushered into an empty drawing-room, and, from a needle-book and work-basket, hastily abandoned, I had some reason to think I interrupted my little friend, Miss Katie, in some domestic labor more praiseworthy than elegant. In this critical age filial piety must hide herself in a closet if she has a mind to darn her father's linen.

Shortly after I was the more fully convinced that I had been too early an intruder, when a wench came to fetch away the basket, and recommended to my courtesies a red and green gentleman in a cage, who answered all my advances by croaking out, "You're a fool—you're a fool, I tell you!" until, upon my word, I began to think the creature was in the right. At last my friend arrived a little overheated. He had been taking a turn at golf to prepare him for "colloquy sublime." And wherefore not, since the game, with its variety of odds, lengths, bunkers, tee'd balls, and so on, may be no inadequate representation of the hazards attending literary pursuits? In particular, those formidable buffets which make one ball spin through the air like a rifle-shot, and strike another down into the very earth it is placed upon, by the maladroitness or the malicious purpose of the player—what are they but parallels to the favorable or depreciating notices of the reviewers, who play at golf with the publica-

tions of the season, even as Altisidora, in her approach to the gates of the infernal regions, saw the devils playing at racket with the new books of Cervantes's days.

Well, every hour has its end. Five o'clock came, and my friend, with his daughters and his handsome young son, who, though fairly buckled to the desk, is every now and then looking over his shoulder at a smart uniform, set seriously about satisfying the corporeal wants of nature; while I, stimulated by a nobler appetite after fame, wished that the touch of a magic wand could, without all the ceremony of picking and choosing, carving and slicing, masticating and swallowing, have transported a *quantum sufficit* of the good things on my friend's hospitable board into the stomachs of those who surrounded it, to be there at leisure converted into chyle, while their thoughts were turned on higher matters. At length all was over. But the young ladies sat still and talked of the music of *The Freischutz*, for nothing else was then thought of: so we discussed the wild hunters' song, and the tame hunters' song, etc., etc., in all which my young friends were quite at home. Luckily for me, all this horning and whooping drew on some allusion to the Seventh Hussars, which gallant regiment, I observe, is a more favorite theme with both Miss Catherine and her brother than with my old friend, who presently looked at his watch, and said something significantly to Mr. James about office hours. The youth got up with the ease of a youngster that would be thought a man of fashion rather than of business, and endeavored, with some success, to walk out of the room as if the locomotion was entirely voluntary; Miss Catherine and her sisters left us at the same time, and now, thought I, my trial comes on.

Reader, did you ever, in the course of your life, cheat the courts of justice and lawyers by agreeing to refer a dubious and important question to the decision of a mutual friend? If so, you may have remarked the relative change which the arbiter undergoes in your estimation, when raised, though by your own free choice, from an ordinary acquaintance, whose opinions were of as little consequence to you as yours to him, into a superior personage, on whose decision your fate must depend *pro tanto*, as my friend Mr. Fairscribe would say. His looks assume a mysterious, if not a minatory, expression; his hat has a loftier air, and his wig, if he wears one, a more formidable buckle.

I felt, accordingly, that my good friend Fairscribe, on the present occasion, had acquired something of a similar in-

crease of consequence. But a week since, he had, in my opinion, been indeed an excellent-meaning man, perfectly competent to everything within his own profession, but immured at the same time among its forms and technicalities, and as incapable of judging of matters of taste as any mighty Goth whatsoever of or belonging to the ancient Senate House of Scotland. But what of that? I had made him my judge by my own election; and I have often observed that an idea of declining such a reference on account of his own consciousness of incompetency is, as it perhaps ought to be, the last which occurs to the referee himself. He that has a literary work subjected to his judgment by the author immediately throws his mind into a critical attitude, though the subject be one which he never before thought of. No doubt the author is well qualified to select his own judge, and why should the arbiter whom he has chosen doubt his own talents for condemnation or acquittal, since he has been doubtless picked out by his friend from his indubitable reliance on their competence? Surely the man who wrote the production is likely to know the person best qualified to judge of it.

Whilst these thoughts crossed my brain, I kept my eyes fixed on my good friend, whose motions appeared unusually tardy to me, while he ordered a bottle of particular claret, decanted it with scrupulous accuracy with his own hand, caused his old domestic to bring a saucer of olives, and chips of toasted bread, and thus, on hospitable thoughts intent, seemed to me to adjourn the discussion which I longed to bring on, yet feared to precipitate.

"He is dissatisfied," thought I, "and is ashamed to show it—afraid, doubtless, of hurting my feelings. What had I to do to talk to him about anything save charters and sasines? Stay, he is going to begin."

"We are old fellows now, Mr. Croftangry," said my landlord; "scarcely so fit to take a poor quart of claret between us as we would have been in better days to take a pint, in the old Scottish liberal acceptation of the phrase. Maybe you would have liked me to have kept James to help us. But if it is not on a holyday or so, I think it is best he should observe office hours."

Here the discourse was about to fall. I relieved it by saying, Mr. James was at the happy time of life when he had better things to do than to sit over the bottle. "I suppose," said I, "your son is a reader."

"Um—yes—James may be called a reader in a sense; but

I doubt there is little solid in his studies—poetry and plays, Mr. Croftangry, all nonsense; they set his head a-gadding after the army, when he should be minding his business."

"I suppose, then, that romances do not find much more grace in your eyes than dramatic and poetical compositions?"

"Deil a bit—deil a bit, Mr. Croftangry, nor historical productions either. There is too much fighting in history, as if men only were brought into this world to send one another out of it. It nourishes false notions of our being, and chief and proper end, Mr. Croftangry."

Still all this was general, and I became determined to bring our discourse to a focus. "I am afraid, then, I have done very ill to trouble you with my idle manuscripts, Mr. Fairscribe; but you must do me the justice to remember that I had nothing better to do than to amuse myself by writing the sheets I put into your hands the other day. I may truly plead—

I left no calling for this idle trade."

"I cry your mercy, Mr. Croftangry," said my old friend, suddenly recollecting; "yes—yes, I have been very rude; but I had forgotten entirely that you had taken a spell yourself at that idle man's trade."

"I suppose," replied I, "you, on your side, have been too *busy* a man to look at my poor *Chronicles?*"

"No—no," said my friend, "I am not so bad as that neither. I have read them bit by bit, just as I could get a moment's time, and I believe I shall very soon get through them."

"Well, my good friend?" said I, interrogatively.

And "*Well,* Mr. Croftangry," cried he, "I really think you have got over the ground very tolerably well. I have noted down here two or three bits of things, which I presume to be errors of the press, otherwise it might be alleged, perhaps, that you did not fully pay that attention to the grammatical rules which one would desire to see rigidly observed."

I looked at my friend's notes, which, in fact, showed that, in one or two grossly obvious passages, I had left uncorrected such solecisms in grammar.

"Well—well, I own my fault; but, setting apart these casual errors, how do you like the matter and the manner of what I have been writing, Mr. Fairscribe?"

"Why," said my friend, pausing, with more grave and important hesitation than I thanked him for, "there is not

much to be said against the manner. The style is terse and intelligible, Mr. Croftangry—very intelligible; and that I consider as the first point in everything that is intended to be understood. There are, indeed, here and there some flights and fancies, which I comprehended with difficulty; but I got to your meaning at last. There are people that are like ponies: their judgments cannot go fast, but they go sure."

"That is a pretty clear proposition, my friend; but then how did you like the meaning when you did get at it? or was that, like some ponies, too difficult to catch, and, when catched, not worth the trouble?"

"I am far from saying that, my dear sir, in respect it would be downright uncivil; but since you ask my opinion, I wish you could have thought about something more appertaining to civil policy than all this bloody work about shooting and dirking, and downright hanging. I am told it was the Germans who first brought in such a practise of choosing their heroes out of the Porteous Roll;* but, by my faith, we are like to be upsides with them. The first was, as I am credibly informed, Mr. Scolar, as they call him—a scholar-like piece of work he has made of it, with his robbers and thieves."

"Schiller," said I, "my dear sir—let it be Schiller."

"Shiller, or what you like," said Mr. Fairscribe. "I found the book where I wish I had found a better one, and that is, in Kate's work-basket. I sat down, and, like an old fool, began to read; but there, I grant, you have the better of Shiller, Mr. Croftangry."

"I should be glad, my dear sir, that you really think I have *approached* that admirable author; even your friendly partiality ought not to talk of my having *excelled* him."

"But I do say you have excelled him, Mr. Croftangry, in a most material particular. For surely a book of amusement should be something that one can take up and lay down at pleasure; and I can say justly, I was never at the least loss to put aside these sheets of yours when business came in the way. But, faith, this Shiller, sir, does not let you off so easily. I forgot one appointment on particular business, and I wilfully broke through another, that I might stay at home and finish his confounded book, which, after all, is about two brothers, the greatest rascals I ever heard of. The one, sir, goes near to murder his own father, and

* List of criminal indictments, so termed in Scotland.

the other—which you would think still stranger—sets about to debauch his own wife."

"I find, then, Mr. Fairscribe, that you have no taste for the romance of real life, no pleasure in contemplating those spirit-rousing impulses which force men of fiery passions upon great crimes and great virtues ?"

"Why, as to that, I am not just so sure. But then, to mend the matter," continued the critic, "you have brought in Highlanders into every story, as if you were going back again, *velis et remis*, into the old days of Jacobitism. I must speak my plain mind, Mr. Croftangry. I cannot tell what innovations in kirk and state may be now proposed, but our fathers were friends to both, as they were settled at the glorious Revolution, and liked a tartan plaid as little as they did a white surplice. I wish to Heaven all this tartan fever bode well to the Protestant succession and the Kirk of Scotland."

"Both too well settled, I hope, in the minds of the subject," said I, "to be affected by old remembrances, on which we look back as on the portraits of our ancestors, without recollecting, while we gaze on them, any of the feuds by which the originals were animated while alive. But most happy should I be to light upon any topic to supply the place of the Highlands, Mr. Fairscribe. I have been just reflecting that the theme is becoming a little exhausted, and your experience may perhaps supply——"

"Ha—ha—ha, *my* experience supply !" interrupted Mr. Fairscribe, with a laugh of derision. "Why, you might as well ask my son James's experience to supply a case about thirlage. No—no, my good friend, I have lived by the law and in the law all my life ; and when you seek the impulses that make soldiers desert and shoot their sergeants and corporals, and Highland drovers dirk English graziers, to prove themselves men of fiery passions, it is not to a man like me you should come. I could tell you some tricks of my own trade, perhaps, and a queer story or two of estates that have been lost and recovered. But, to tell you the truth, I think you might do with your Muse of Fiction, as you call her, as many an honest man does with his own sons in flesh and blood."

"And how is that, my dear sir ?"

"Send her to India, to be sure. That is the true place for a Scot to thrive in ; and if you carry your story fifty years back, as there is nothing to hinder you, you will find as much shooting and stabbing there as ever was in the wild

Highlands. If you want rognes, as they are so much in fashion with you, you have that gallant caste of adventurers who laid down their consciences at the Cape of Good Hope as they went out to India, and forgot to take them up again when they returned. Then, for great exploits, you have in the old history of India, before Europeans were numerous there, the most wonderful deeds, done by the least possible means, that perhaps the annals of the world can afford."

"I know it," said I, kindling at the ideas his speech inspired. "I remember, in the delightful pages of Orme,* the interest which mingles in his narratives, from the very small number of English which are engaged. Each officer of a regiment becomes known to you by name—nay, the non-commissioned officers and privates acquire an individual share of interest. They are distinguished among the natives like the Spaniards among the Mexicans. What do I say? They are like Homer's demigods among the warring mortals. Men like Clive and Cailliaud † influenced great events like Jove himself. Inferior officers are like Mars or Neptune, and the sergeants and corporals might well pass for demigods. Then the various religious costumes, habits, and manners of the people of Hindostan—the patient Hindoo, the warlike Rajahpoot, the haughty Moslemah, the savage and vindictive Malay. Glorious and unbounded subjects! The only objection is, that I have never been there, and know nothing at all about them."

"Nonsense, my good friend. You will tell us about them all the better that you know nothing of what you are saying. And come, we'll finish the bottle, and when Katie—her sisters go to the assembly—has given us tea, she will tell you the outline of the story of poor Menie Gray, whose picture you will see in the drawing-room, a distant relation of my father's, who had, however, a handsome part of cousin Menie's succession. There are none living that can be hurt by the story now, though it was thought best to smother it up at the time, as indeed even the whispers about it led poor cousin Menie to live very retired. I mind her well when a child. There was something very gentle, but rather tiresome, about poor cousin Menie."

* *History of Military Transactions of the British Nation in Indostan, from the Year* 1745 *to* 1761, by Robert Orme [1763], 3 vols. 4to (*Laing*).

† Robert Clive, of Indian celebrity, born 1725, died 1774; and Frederic Cailliaud, the French traveler in Africa, born 1787, died 1869 (*Laing*).

When we came into the drawing-room, my friend pointed to a picture which I had before noticed, without, however, its having attracted more than a passing look ; now I regarded it with more attention. It was one of those portraits of the middle of the 18th century, in which artists endeavored to conquer the stiffness of hoops and brocades, by throwing a fancy drapery around the figure, with loose folds like a mantle or dressing-gown, the stays, however, being retained, and the bosom displayed in a manner which shows that our mothers, like their daughters, were as liberal of their charms as the nature of their dress might permit. To this the well-known style of the period the features and form of the individual added, at first sight, little interest. It represented a handsome woman of about thirty, her hair wound simply about her head, her features regular, and her complexion fair. But on looking more closely, especially after having had a hint that the original had been the heroine of a tale, I could observe a melancholy sweetness in the countenance, that seemed to speak of woes endured and injuries sustained with that resignation which women can and do sometimes display under the insults and ingratitude of those on whom they have bestowed their affections.

"Yes, she was an excellent and an ill-used woman," said Mr. Fairscribe, his eye fixed like mine on the picture. "She left our family not less, I daresay, than five thousand pounds, and I believe she died worth four times that sum ; but it was divided among the nearest of kin, which was all fair."

"But her history, Mr. Fairscribe," said I ; "to judge from her look, it must have been a melancholy one."

"You may say that, Mr. Croftangry. Melancholy enough, extraordinary enough, too. But," added he, swallowing in haste a cup of the tea which was presented to him, "I must away to my business: we cannot be gowffing all the morning, and telling old stories all the afternoon. Katie knows all the outs and the ins of cousin Menie's adventures as well as I do, and when she has given you the particulars, then I am at your service, to condescend more articulately upon dates or particulars."

Well, here was I, a gay old bachelor, left to hear a love tale from my young fried Katie Fairscribe, who, when she is not surrounded by a bevy of gallants, at which time, to my thinking, she shows less to advantage, is as pretty, well-behaved, and unaffected a girl as you see tripping the new walks of Princes Street or Heriot Row. Old bachelorship so decided as mine has its privileges in such a *tête-à-tête*, pro-

viding you are, or can seem for the time, perfectly good-humored and attentive, and do not ape the manners of your younger years, in attempting which you will only make yourself ridiculous. I don't pretend to be so indifferent to the company of a pretty young woman as was desired by the poet, who wished to sit beside his mistress—

> As unconcern'd, as when
> Her infant beauty could beget
> Nor happiness nor pain.

On the contrary, I can look on beauty and innocence as something of which I know and esteem the value, without the desire or hope to make them my own. A young lady can afford to talk with an old stager like me without either artifice or affectation; and we may maintain a species of friendship, the more tender, perhaps, because we are of different sexes, yet with which that distinction has very little to do.

Now, I hear my wisest and most critical neighbor remark, "Mr. Croftangry is in the way of doing a foolish thing. He is well to pass—Old Fairscribe knows to a penny what he is worth, and Miss Katie, with all her airs, may like the old brass that buys the new pan. I thought Mr. Croftangry was looking very cadgy when he came in to play a rubber with us last night. Poor gentleman, I am sure I should be sorry to see him make a fool of himself."

Spare your compassion, dear madam, there is not the least danger. The *beaux yeux de ma cassette* are not brilliant enough to make amends for the spectacles which must supply the dimness of my own. I am a little deaf too, as you know to your sorrow when we are partners; and if I could get a nymph to marry me with all these imperfections, who the deuce would marry Janet MacEvoy? and from Janet MacEvoy Chrystal Croftangry will not part.

Miss Katie Fairscribe gave me the tale of Menie Gray with much taste and simplicity, not attempting to suppress the feelings, whether of grief or resentment, which justly and naturally arose from the circumstances of the tale. Her father afterwards confirmed the principal outlines of the story, and furnished me with some additional circumstances, which Miss Katie had suppressed or forgotten. Indeed, I have learned on this occasion what old Lintot meant when he told Pope that he used to propitiate the critics of importance, when he had a work in the press, by now and then letting them see a sheet of the blotted proof, or a few leaves

of the original manuscript. Our mystery of authorship hath something about it so fascinating, that if you admit any one, however little he may previously have been disposed to such studies, into your confidence, you will find that he considers himself as a party interested, and, if success follows, will think himself entitled to no inconsiderable share of the praise.

The reader has seen that no one could have been naturally less interested than was my excellent friend Fairscribe in my lucubrations, when I first consulted him on the subject ; but since he has contributed a subject to the work, he has become a most zealous coadjutor ; and, half-ashamed, I believe, yet half-proud, of the literary stock-company in which he has got a share, he never meets me without jogging my elbow, and dropping some mysterious hints, as, "I am saying, when will you give us any more of yon ?" or, "Yon's not a bad narrative—I like yon."

Pray Heaven the reader may be of his opinion.

THE SURGEON'S DAUGHTER

CHAPTER I

When fainting Nature call'd for aid,
  And hovering Death prepared the blow,
His vigorous remedy display'd
  The power of Art without the show.
In Misery's darkest caverns known,
  His useful care was ever nigh,
Where hopeless Anguish pour'd his groan,
  And lonely Want retired to die ;
No summons mock'd by cold delay,
  No petty gains disclaim'd by pride,
The modest wants of every day
  The toil of every day supplied.

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

THE exquisitely beautiful portrait which the Rambler has painted of his friend Levett well describes Gideon Gray and many other village doctors, from whom Scotland reaps more benefit, and to whom she is perhaps more ungrateful, than to any other class of men, excepting her schoolmasters.

Such a rural man of medicine is usually the inhabitant of some petty borough or village, which forms the central point of his practise. But, besides attending to such cases as the village may afford, he is day and night at the service of every one who may command his assistance within a circle of forty miles in diameter, untraversed by roads in many directions, and including moors, mountains, rivers, and lakes. For late and dangerous journeys through an inaccessible country, for services of the most essential kind, rendered at the expense, or risk at least, of his own health and life, the Scottish village doctor receives at best a very moderate recompense, often one which is totally inadequate, and very frequently none whatsoever. He has none of the ample resources proper to the brothers of the profession in an English town. The burgesses of a Scottish borough are

rendered, by their limited means of luxury, inaccessible to gout, surfeits, and all the comfortable chronic diseases which are attendant on wealth and indolence. Fours years or so of abstemiousness enable them to stand an election dinner; and there is no hope of broken heads among a score or two of quiet electors, who settle the business over a table. There the mothers of the state never make a point of pouring, in the course of every revolving year, a certain quantity of doctor's stuff through the bowels of their beloved children. Every old woman from the "townhead to the townfit" can prescribe a dose of salts or spread a plaster; and it is only when a fever or a palsy renders matters serious that the assistance of the doctor is invoked by his neighbors in the borough.

But still the man of science cannot complain of inactivity or want of practise. If he does not find patients at his door, he seeks them through a wide circle. Like the ghostly lover of Bürger's *Leonora*, he mounts at midnight, and traverses in darkness paths which, to those less accustomed to them, seem formidable in daylight, through straits where the slightest aberration would plunge him into a morass, or throw him over a precipice, on to cabins which his horse might ride over without knowing they lay in his way, unless he happened to fall through the roofs. When he arrives at such a stately termination of his journey, where his services are required either to bring a wretch into the world or prevent one from leaving it, the scene of misery is often such that, far from touching the hard-saved shillings which are gratefully offered to him, he bestows his medicines as well as his attendance—for charity. I have heard the celebrated traveler, Mungo Park, who had experienced both courses of life, rather give the preference to traveling as a discoverer in Africa than to wandering by night and day the wilds of his native land in the capacity of a country medical practitioner. He mentioned having once upon a time rode forty miles, sat up all night, and successfully assisted a woman under influence of the primitive curse, for which his sole remuneration was a roasted potato and a draught of buttermilk. But his was not the heart which grudged the labor that relieved human misery. In short, there is no creature in Scotland that works harder and is more poorly requited than the country doctor, unless perhaps it may be his horse. Yet the horse is, and indeed must be, hardy, active, and indefatigable, in spite of a rough coat and indifferent condition; and so you will often find in his master, under an unpromising and

blunt exterior, professional skill and enthusiasm, intelligence, humanity, courage, and science.

Mr. Gideon Gray, surgeon in the village of Middlemas, situated in one of the midland counties of Scotland, led the rough, active, and ill-rewarded course of life which we have endeavored to describe. He was a man between forty and fifty, devoted to his profession, and of such reputation in the medical world that he had been more than once, as opportunities occurred, advised to exchange Middlemas and its meager circle of practise for some of the larger towns in Scotland, or for Edinburgh itself. This advice he had always declined. He was a plain, blunt man, who did not love restraint, and was unwilling to subject himself to that which was exacted in polite society. He had not himself found out, nor had any friend hinted to him, that a slight touch of the cynic, in manner and habits, gives the physician, to the common eye, an air of authority which greatly tends to enlarge his reputation. Mr. Gray, or, as the country people called him, Doctor Gray (he might hold the title by diploma for what I know, though he only claimed the rank of Master of Arts), had few wants, and these were amply supplied by a professional income which generally approached two hundred pounds a-year, for which, upon an average, he traveled about five thousand miles on horseback in the course of the twelve months. Nay, so liberally did this revenue support himself and his ponies, called Pestle and Mortar, which he exercised alternately, that he took a damsel to share it, Jean Watson, namely, the cherry-cheeked daughter of an honest farmer, who, being herself one of twelve children, who had been brought up on an income of fourscore pounds a-year, never thought there could be poverty in more than double the sum; and looked on Gray, though now termed by irreverent youth the Old Doctor, as a very advantageous match. For several years they had no children, and it seemed as if Doctor Gray, who had so often assisted the efforts of the goddess Lucina, was never to invoke her in his own behalf. Yet his domestic roof was, on a remarkable occasion, decreed to be the scene where the goddess's art was required.

Late of an autumn evening three old women might be observed plying their aged limbs through the single street of the village at Middlemas towards the honored door, which, fenced off from the vulgar causeway, was defended by a broken paling, enclosing two slips of ground, half arable, half overrun with an abortive attempt at shrubbery. The

door itself was blazoned with the name of Gideon Gray, M. A., Surgeon, etc. etc. Some of the idle young fellows who had been a minute or two before loitering at the other end of the street before the door of the ale-house (for the pretended inn deserved no better name) now accompanied the old dames with shouts of laughter, excited by their unwonted agility; and with bets on the winner, as loudly expressed as if they had been laid at the starting-post of Middlemas races. "Half-a-mutchkin on Luckie Simson!" "Auld Peg Tamson against the field!" "Mair speed, Alison Jaup, ye'll tak the wind out of them yet!" "Canny against the hill, lasses, or we may have a brusten auld carline amang ye!" These, and a thousand such gibes, rent the air, without being noticed, or even heard, by the anxious racers, whose object of contention seemed to be which should first reach the doctor's door.

"Guide us, doctor, what can be the matter now?" said Mrs. Gray, whose character was that of a good-natured simpleton; "here's Peg Tamson, Jean Simson, and Alison Jaup running a race on the Hie Street of the burgh!"

The doctor, who had but the moment before hung his wet greatcoat before the fire (for he was just dismounted from a long journey), hastened downstairs, auguring some new occasion for his services, and happy that, from the character of the messengers, it was likely to be within burgh, and not landward.

He had just reached the door as Luckie Simson, one of the racers, arrived in the little area before it. She had got the start and kept it, but at the expense for the time of her power of utterance; for, when she came in presence of the doctor, she stood blowing like a grampus, her loose toy flying back from her face, making the most violent efforts to speak, but without the power of uttering a single intelligible word.

Peg Thomson whipped in before her. "The leddy, sir—the leddy——"

"Instant help—instant help——" screeched, rather than uttered, Alison Jaup; while Luckie Simson, who had certainly won the race, found words to claim the prize which had set them all in motion. "And I hope, sir, you will recommend me to be the sick-nurse; I was here to bring you the tidings lang before ony o' thae lazy queans."

Loud were the counter protestations of the two competitors, and loud the laugh of the idle "loons" who listened at a little distance.

"Hold your tongue, ye flyting fools," said the doctor; "and you, ye idle rascals, if I come you among you——" So saying, he smacked his long-lashed whip with great emphasis, producing much the effect of the celebrated *Quos ego* of Neptune, in the First *Æneid*. "And now," said the doctor, "where or who is this lady?"

The question was scarce necessary; for a plain carriage, with four horses, came at a foot's-pace towards the door of the doctor's house, and the old women, now more at their ease, gave the doctor to understand that the gentleman thought the accommodation of the Swan Inn totally unfit for his lady's rank and condition, and had, by their advice (each claiming the merit of the suggestion), brought her here, to experience the hospitality of the "west-room"—a spare apartment in which Doctor Gray occasionally accommodated such patients as he desired to keep for a space of time under his own eye.

There were two persons only in the vehicle. The one, a gentleman in a riding-dress, sprung out, and having received from the doctor an assurance that the lady would receive tolerable accommodation in his house, he lent assistance to his companion to leave the carriage, and with great apparent satisfaction saw her safely deposited in a decent sleeping-apartment, and under the respectable charge of the doctor and his lady, who assured him once more of every species of attention. To bind their promise more firmly, the stranger slipped a purse of twenty guineas (for this story chanced in the golden age) into the hand of the doctor, as an earnest of the most liberal recompense, and requested he would spare no expense in providing all that was necessary or desirable for a person in the lady's condition, and for the helpless being to whom she might immediately be expected to give birth. He then said he would retire to the inn, where he begged a message might instantly acquaint him with the expected change in the lady's situation.

"She is of rank," he said, "and a foreigner; let no expense be spared. We designed to have reached Edinburgh, but were forced to turn off the road by an accident." Once more he said, "Let no expense be spared, and manage that she may travel as soon as possible."

"That," said the doctor, "is past my control. Nature must not be hurried, and she avenges herself of every attempt to do so."

"But art," said the stranger, "can do much," and he

proffered a second purse, which seemed as heavy as the first.

"Art," said the doctor, "may be recompensed, but cannot be purchased. You have already paid me more than enough to take the utmost care I can of your lady; should I accept more money, it could only be for promising, by implication at least, what is beyond my power to perform. Every possible care shall be taken of your lady, and that affords the best chance of her being speedily able to travel. Now, go you to your inn, sir, for I may be instantly wanted, and we have not yet provided either an attendant for the lady or a nurse for the child; but both shall be presently done."

"Yet a moment, doctor—what languages do you understand?"

"Latin and French I can speak indifferently, and so as to be understood; and I read a little Italian."

"But no Portuguese or Spanish?" continued the stranger.

"No, sir."

"That is unlucky. But you may make her understand you by means of French. Take notice, you are to comply with her request in everything; if you want means to do so, you may apply to me."

"May I ask, sir, by what name the lady is to be——"

"It is totally indifferent," said the stranger, interrupting the question; "you shall know it at more leisure."

So saying, he threw his ample cloak about him, turning himself half round to assist the operation, with an air which the doctor would have found it difficult to imitate, and walked down the street to the little inn. Here he paid and dismissed the postilions, and shut himself up in an apartment, ordering no one to be admitted till the doctor should call.

The doctor, when he returned to his patient's apartment, found his wife in great surprise, which, as is usual with persons of her character, was not unmixed with fear and anxiety.

"She cannot speak a word like a Christian being," said Mrs. Gray.

"I know it," said the doctor.

"But she threeps to keep on a black fause-face, and skirls if we offer to take it away."

"Well, then, let her wear it. What harm will it do?"

"Harm, doctor! Was ever honest woman brought to bed with a fause-face on?"

"Seldom, perhaps. But, Jean, my dear, those who are

not quite honest must be brought to bed all the same as those who are, and we are not to endanger the poor thing's life by contradicting her whims at present."

Approaching the sick woman's bed, he observed that she indeed wore a thin silk mask, of the kind which do such uncommon service in the Elder Comedy; such as women of rank still wore in travelling, but certainly never in the situation of this poor lady. It would seem she had sustained importunity on the subject, for when she saw the doctor she put her hand to her face, as if she was afraid he would insist on pulling off the vizard. He hastened to say, in tolerable French, that her will should be a law to them in every respect, and that she was at perfect liberty to wear the mask till it was her pleasure to lay it aside. She understood him; for she replied, by a very imperfect attempt, in the same language, to express her gratitude for the permission, as she seemed to regard it, of retaining her disguise.

The doctor proceeded to other arrangements; and, for the satisfaction of those readers who may love minute information, we record that Luckie Simson, the first in the race, carried as a prize the situation of sick-nurse beside the delicate patient; that Peg Thomson was permitted the privilege of recommending her good daughter, Bet Jamieson, to be wet-nurse; and an *œ*, or grand-child, of Luckie Jaup was hired to assist in the increased drudgery of the family; the doctor thus, like a practised minister, dividing among his trusty adherents such good things as fortune placed at his disposal.

About one in the morning the doctor made his appearance at the Swan Inn, and acquainted the stranger gentleman that he wished him joy of being the father of a healthy boy, and that the mother was, in the usual phrase, as well as could be expected.

The stranger heard the news with seeming satisfaction, and then exclaimed, "He must be christened, doctor—he must be christened instantly."

"There can be no hurry for that," said the doctor.

"*We* think otherwise," said the stranger, cutting his argument short. "I am a Catholic, doctor, and as I may be obliged to leave this place before the lady is able to travel, I desire to see my child received into the pale of the church. There is, I understand, a Catholic priest in this wretched place?"

"There is a Catholic gentleman, sir, Mr. Goodriche, who is reported to be in orders."

"I commend your caution, doctor," said the stranger: "it is dangerous to be too positive on any subject. I will bring that same Mr. Goodriche to your house to-morrow."

Gray hesitated for a moment. "I am a Presbyterian Protestant, sir," he said, "a friend to the constitution as established in church and state, as I have a good right, having drawn his Majesty's pay, God bless him, for four years, as surgeon's mate in the Cameronian regiment, as my regimental Bible and commission can testify. But although I be bound especially to abhor all trafficking or trinketing with Papists, yet I will not stand in the way of a tender conscience. Sir, you may call with Mr. Goodriche when you please at my house; and undoubtedly, you being, as I suppose, the father of the child, you will arrange matters as you please; only, I do not desire to be thought an abettor or countenancer of any part of the Popish ritual."

"Enough, sir," said the stranger, haughtily, "we understand each other."

The next day he appeared at the doctor's house with Mr. Goodriche, and two persons understood to belong to that reverend gentleman's communion. The party were shut up in an apartment with the infant, and it may be presumed that the solemnity of baptism was administered to the unconscious being thus strangely launched upon the world. When the priest and witnesses had retired, the strange gentleman informed Mr. Gray that, as the lady had been pronounced unfit for traveling for several days, he was himself about to leave the neighborhood, but would return thither in the space of ten days, when he hoped to find his companion able to leave it.

"And by what name are we to call the child and mother?"

"The infant's name is Richard."

"But it must have some surname; so must the lady—she cannot reside in my house, yet be without a name."

"Call them by the name of your town here—Middlemas, I think it is?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, Mrs. Middlemas is the name of the mother, and Richard Middlemas of the child—and I am Matthew Middlemas, at your service. This," he continued, "will provide Mrs. Middlemas in everything she may wish to possess—or assist her in case of accidents." With that he placed £100 in Mr. Gray's hand, who rather scrupled receiving it, saying, "He supposed the lady was qualified to be her own purse-bearer."

"The worst in the world, I assure you, doctor," replied the stranger. "If she wished to change that piece of paper, she would scarce know how many guineas she should receive for it. No, Mr. Gray, I assure you you will find Mrs. Middleton—Middlemas—what did I call her ?—as ignorant of the affairs of this world as any one you have met with in your practise. So you will please to be her treasurer and administrator for the time, as for a patient that is incapable to look after her own affairs."

This was spoke, as it struck Dr. Gray, in rather a haughty and supercilious manner. The words intimated nothing in themselves more than the same desire of preserving incognito which might be gathered from all the rest of the stranger's conduct ; but the manner seemed to say, "I am not a person to be questioned by any one. What I say must be received without comment, how little soever, you may believe or understand it." It strengthened Gray in his opinion, that he had before him a case either of seduction or of private marriage, betwixt persons of the very highest rank ; and the whole bearing, both of the lady and the gentleman, confirmed his suspicions. It was not in his nature to be troublesome or inquisitive, but he could not fail to see that the lady wore no marriage-ring ; and her deep sorrow and perpetual tremor seemed to indicate an unhappy creature who had lost the protection of parents without acquiring a legitimate right to that of a husband. He was therefore somewhat anxious when Mr. Middlemas, after a private conference of some length with the lady, bade him farewell. It is true, he assured him of his return within ten days, being the very shortest space which Gray could be prevailed upon to assign for any prospect of the lady being moved with safety.

"I trust in Heaven that he will return," said Gray to himself, "but there is too much mystery about all this for the matter being a plain and well-meaning transaction. If he intends to treat this poor thing as many a poor girl has been used before, I hope that my house will not be the scene in which he chooses to desert her. The leaving the money has somewhat a suspicious aspect, and looks as if my friend were in the act of making some compromise with his conscience. Well, I must hope the best. Meantime my path plainly is to do what I can for the poor lady's benefit."

Mr. Gray visited his patient shortly after Mr. Middlemas's departure—as soon, indeed, as he could be admitted. He found her in violent agitation. Gray's experience dictated the best mode of relief and tranquillity. He caused her

infant to be brought to her. She wept over it for a long time, and the violence of her agitation subsided under the influence of parental feelings, which, from her appearance of extreme youth, she must have experienced for the first time.

The observant physician could, after this paroxysm remark that his patient's mind was chiefly occupied in computing the passage of the time, and anticipating the period when the return of her husband—if husband he was—might be expected. She consulted almanacks, inquired concerning distances, though so cautiously as to make it evident she desired to give no indication of the direction of her companion's journey, and repeatedly compared her watch with those of others, exercising, it was evident, all that delusive species of mental arithmetic by which mortals attempt to accelerate the passage of time while they calculate his progress. At other times she wept anew over her child, which was by all judges pronounced as goodly an infant as needed to be seen; and Gray sometimes observed that she murmured sentences to the unconscious infant, not only the words, but the very sound and accents of which were strange to him, and which, in particular, he knew not to be Portuguese.

Mr. Goodriche, the Catholic priest, demanded access to her upon one occasion. She at first declined his visit, but afterwards received it, under the idea perhaps, that he might have news from Mr. Middlemas, as he called himself. The interview was a very short one, and the priest left the lady's apartment in displeasure, which his prudence could scarce disguise from Mr. Gray. He never returned, although the lady's condition would have made his attentions and consolations necessary, had she been a member of the Catholic Church.

Our doctor began at length to suspect his fair guest was a Jewess, who had yielded up her person and affections to one of a different religion: and the peculiar style of her beautiful countenance went to enforce this opinion. The circumstance made no difference to Gray, who saw only her distress and desolation, and endeavored to remedy both to the utmost of his power. He was, however, desirous to conceal it from his wife and the others around the sick person, whose prudence and liberality of thinking might be more justly doubted. He therefore so regulated her diet that she could not be either offended or brought under suspicion by any of the articles forbidden by the Mosiac law being presented to her. In other respects than what concerned her health or convenience, he had but little intercourse with her.

The space passed within which the stranger's return to the borough had been so anxiously expected by his female companion. The disappointment occasioned by his non-arrival was manifested in the convalescent by inquietude, which was at first mingled with peevishness, and afterwards with doubt and fear. When two or three days had passed without message or letter of any kind, Gray himself became anxious, both on his own account and the poor lady's, lest the stranger should have actually entertained the idea of deserting this defenseless and probably injured woman. He longed to have some communication with her, which might enable him to judge what inquiries could be made, or what else was most fitting to be done. But so imperfect was the poor young woman's knowledge of the French language, and perhaps so unwilling she herself to throw any light on her situation, that every attempt of this kind proved abortive. When Gray asked questions concerning any subject which appeared to approach to explanation, he observed she usually answered him by shaking her head, in token of not understanding what he said ; at other times by silence and with tears, and sometimes referring him to *Monsieur*.

For *Monsieur's* arrival, then, Gray began to become very impatient, as that which alone could put an end to a disagreeable species of mystery, which the good company of the borough began now to make the principal subject of their gossip ; some blaming Gray for taking foreign "landloupers" into his house, on the subject of whose morals the most serious doubts might be entertained ; others envying the "bonny hand" the doctor was like to make of it, by having disposal of the wealthy stranger's traveling funds—a circumstance which could not be well concealed from the public, when the honest man's expenditure for trifling articles of luxury came far to exceed its ordinary bounds.

The conscious probity of the honest doctor enabled him to despise this sort of tittle-tattle, though the secret knowledge of its existence could not be agreeable to him. He went his usual rounds with his usual perseverance, and waited with patience until time should throw light on the subject and history of his lodger. It was now the fourth week after her confinement, and the recovery of the stranger might be considered as perfect, when Gray, returning from one of his ten-mile visits, saw a post-chaise and four horses at the door. "This man has returned," he said, "and my suspicions have done him less than justice." With that he spurred his horse, a signal which the trusty steed obeyed the more

readily as its progress was in the direction of the stable door. But when, dismounting, the doctor hurried into his own house, it seemed to him that the departure as well as the arrival of this distressed lady was destined to bring confusion to his peaceful dwelling. Several idlers had assembled about his door, and two or three had impudently thrust themselves forward almost into the passage to listen to a confused altercation which was heard from within.

The doctor hastened forward, the foremost of the intruders retreating in confusion on his approach, while he caught the tones of his wife's voice, raised to a pitch which he knew by experience boded no good; for Mrs. Gray, good-humored and tractable in general, could sometimes perform the high part in a matrimonial duet. Having much more confidence in his wife's good intentions than her prudence, he lost no time in pushing into the parlor, to take the matter into his own hands. Here he found his helpmate at the head of the whole militia of the sick lady's apartment—that is, wet-nurse, and sick-nurse, and girl of all work—engaged in violent dispute with two strangers. The one was a dark-featured elderly man, with an eye of much sharpness and severity of expression, which now seemed partly quenched by a mixture of grief and mortification. The other, who appeared actively sustaining the dispute with Mrs. Gray, was a stout, bold-looking, hard-faced person, armed with pistols, of which he made rather an unnecessary and ostentatious display.

"Here is my husband, sir," said Mrs. Gray, in a tone of triumph, for she had the grace to believe the doctor one of the greatest men living—"here is the doctor; let us see what you will say now."

"Why, just what I said before, ma'am," answered the man, "which is, that my warrant must be obeyed. It is regular, ma'am—regular."

So saying, he struck the forefinger of his right hand against a paper which he held towards Mrs. Gray with his left.

"Address yourself to me, if you please, sir," said the doctor, seeing that he ought to lose no time in removing the cause into the proper court. "I am the master of this house, sir, and I wish to know the cause of this visit."

"My business is soon told," said the man. "I am a king's messenger, and this lady has treated me as if I was a baron-bailie's officer."

"That is not the question, sir," replied the doctor. "If you are a king's messenger, where is your warrant, and what

do you propose to do here?" At the same time he whispered the little wench to call Mr. Lawford, the town-clerk, to come thither as fast as he possibly could. The good-daughter of Peg Thomson started off with an activity worthy of her mother-in-law.*

"There is my warrant," said the official, "and you may satisfy yourself."

"The shameless loon dare not tell the doctor his errand," said Mrs. Gray, exultingly.

"A bonny errand it is," said old Luckie Simson, "to carry away a lying-in woman, as a gled would do a clocking-hen."

"A woman no a month delivered," echoed the nurse Jamieson.

"Twenty-four days eight hours and seven minutes to a second," said Mrs. Gray.

The doctor, having looked over the warrant, which was regular, began to be afraid that the females of his family, in their zeal for defending the character of their sex, might be stirred up into some sudden fit of mutiny, and therefore commanded them to be silent.

"This," he said, "is a warrant for arresting the bodies of Richard Tresham and of Zilia de Monçada, on account of high treason. Sir, I have served his Majesty, and this is not a house in which traitors are harbored. I know nothing of any of these two persons, nor have I ever heard even their names."

"But the lady whom you have received into your family," said the messenger, "is Zilia de Monçada, and here stands her father, Matthias de Monçada, who will make oath to it."

"If this be true," said Mr. Gray, looking towards the alleged officer, "you have taken a singular dut yon you. It is neither my habit to deny my own actions nor to oppose the laws of the land. There is a lady in this house slowly recovering from confinement, having become under this roof the mother of a healthy child. If she be the person described in this warrant, and this gentleman's daughter, I must surrender her to the laws of the country."

Here the Esculapian militia were once more in motion.

"Surrender, Doctor Gray! It's a shame to hear you speak, and you that lives by women and weans, abune your other means!" so exclaimed his fair better part.

"I wonder to hear the doctor!" said the younger nurse; "There's no a wife in the town would believe it o' him."

* [Compare p. 7.]

"I aye thought the doctor was a man till this moment," said Luckie Simson; "but I believe him now to be an auld wife, little baulder than mysell; and I dinna wonder now that poor Mrs. Gray——"

"Hold your peace, you foolish woman," said the doctor. "Do you think this business is not bad enough already, that you are making it worse with your senseless claver? Gentlemen, this is a very sad case. Here is a warrant for a high crime against a poor creature who is little fit to be moved from one house to another, much more dragged to a prison. I tell you plainly, that I think the execution of this arrest may cause her death. It is your business, sir, if you be really her father, to consider what you can do to soften this matter rather than drive it on."

"Better death than dishonor," replied the stern-looking old man, with a voice as harsh as his aspect; "and you, messenger," he continued, "look what you do, and execute the warrant at your peril."

"You hear," said the man, appealing to the doctor himself, "I must have immediate access to the lady."

"In a lucky time," said Mr. Gray, "here comes the town-clerk. You are very welcome, Mr. Lawford. Your opinion here is much wanted as a man of law, as well as of sense and humanity. I was never more glad to see you in all my life."

He then rapidly stated the case; and the messenger, understanding the new-comer to be a man of some authority, again exhibited his warrant.

"This is a very sufficient and valid warrant, Dr. Gray," replied the man of law. "Nevertheless, if you are disposed to make oath that instant removal would be unfavorable to the lady's health, unquestionably she must remain here, suitably guarded."

"It is not so much the mere act of locomotion which I am afraid of," said the surgeon; "but I am free to depone, on soul and conscience, that the shame and fear of her father's anger, and the sense of the affront of such an arrest, with terror for its consequences, may occasion violent and dangerous illness—even death itself."

"The father must see the daughter, though they may have quarrelled," said Mr. Lawford; "the officer of justice must execute his warrant, though it should frighten the criminal to death; these evils are only contingent, not direct and immediate consequences. You must give up the lady, Mr. Gray, though your hesitation is very natural."

"At least, Mr. Lawford, I ought to be certain that the person in my house is the party they search for."

"Admit me to her apartment," replied the man whom the messenger termed Monçada.

The messenger, whom the presence of Lawford had made something more placid, began to become impudent once more. He hoped, he said, by means of his female prisoner, to acquire the information necessary to apprehend the more guilty person. If more delays were thrown in his way, that information might come too late, and he would make all who were accessory to such delay responsible for the consequences.

"And I," said Mr. Gray, "though I were to be brought to the gallows for it, protest that this course may be the murder of my patient. Can bail not be taken, Mr. Lawford?"

"Not in cases of high treason," said the official person; and then continued in a confidential tone, "Come, Mr. Gray, we all know you to be a person well affected to our royal sovereign King George and the Government; but you must not push this too far, lest you bring yourself into trouble, which everybody in Middlemas would be sorry for. The forty-five has not been so far gone by but we can remember enough of warrants of high treason—ay, and ladies of quality committed upon such charges. But they were all favorably dealt with—Lady Ogilvy, Lady MacIntosh, Flora Macdonald, and all. No doubt this gentleman knows what he is doing, and has assurances of the young lady's safety. So you must just jouk and let the jaw gae by, as we say."

"Follow me, then, gentlemen," said Gideon, "and you shall see the young lady;" and then, his strong features working with emotion at anticipation of the distress which he was about to inflict, he led the way up the small staircase, and, opening the door, said to Monçada, who had followed him, "This is your daughter's only place of refuge, in which I am, alas! too weak to be her protector. Enter, sir, if your conscience will permit you."

The stranger turned on him a scowl, into which it seemed as if he would willingly have thrown the power of the fabled basilisk. Then stepping proudly forward, he stalked into the room. He was followed by Lawford and Gray at a little distance. The messenger remained in the doorway. The unhappy young woman had heard the disturbance, and guessed the cause too truly. It is possible she might even have seen the strangers on their descent from the carriage.

When they entered the room she was on her knees, beside an easy-chair, her face in a silk wrapper that was hung over it. The man called Monçada uttered a single word; by the accent it might have been something equivalent to "wretch," but none knew its import. The female gave a convulsive shudder, such as that by which a half-dying soldier is affected on receiving a second wound. But, without minding her emotion, Monçada seized her by the arm, and with little gentleness raised her to her feet, on which she seemed to stand only because she was supported by his strong grasp. He then pulled from her face the mask which she had hitherto worn. The poor creature still endeavored to shroud her face, by covering it with her left hand, as the manner in which she was held prevented her from using the aid of the right. With little effort her father secured that hand also, which, indeed, was of itself far too little to serve the purpose of concealment, and showed her beautiful face, burning with blushes and covered with tears.

"You, *alcalde*, and you, surgeon," he said to Lawford and Gray, with a foreign action and accent, "this woman is my daughter, the same Zilia Monçada who is signaled in that protocol. Make way, and let me carry her where her crimes may be atoned for."

"Are you that person's daughter?" said Lawford to the lady.

"She understands no English," said Gray; and addressing his patient in French, conjured her to let him know whether she was that man's daughter or not, assuring her of protection if the fact were otherwise. The answer was murmured faintly, but was too distinctly intelligible—"He was her father."

All farther title of interference seemed now ended. The messenger arrested his prisoner, and, with some delicacy, required the assistance of the females to get her conveyed to the carriage in waiting.

Gray again interfered. "You will not," he said, "separate the mother and the infant?"

Zilia de Monçada heard the question (which, being addressed to the father, Gray had inconsiderately uttered in French), and it seemed as if it recalled to her recollection the existence of the helpless creature to which she had given birth, forgotten for a moment amongst the accumulated horrors of her father's presence. She uttered a shriek, expressing poignant grief, and turned her eyes on her father with the most intense supplication.

"To the parish with the bastard!" said Moncada; while the helpless mother sunk lifeless into the arms of the females, who had now gathered round her.

"That will not pass, sir," said Gideon. "If you are father to that lady, you must be grandfather to the helpless child; and you must settle in some manner for its future provision, or refer us to some responsible person."

Monçada looked towards Lawford, who expressed himself satisfied of the propriety of what Gray said.

"I object not to pay for whatever the wretched child may require," he said; "and if you, sir," addressing Gray, "choose to take charge of him, and breed him up, you shall have what will better your living."

The doctor was about to refuse a charge so uncivilly offered; but after a moment's reflection he replied, "I think so indifferently of the proceedings I have witnessed, and of those concerned in them, that, if the mother desires that I should retain the charge of this child, I will not refuse to do so."

Monçada spoke to his daughter, who was just beginning to recover from her swoon, in the same language in which he had first addressed her. The proposition which he made seemed highly acceptable, as she started from the arms of the females, and, advancing to Gray, seized his hand, kissed it, bathed it in her tears, and seemed reconciled, even in parting with her child, by the consideration that the infant was to remain under his guardianship.

"Good, kind man," she said in her indifferent French, "you have saved both mother and child."

The father, meanwhile, with mercantile deliberation, placed in Mr. Lawford's hands notes and bills to the amount of a thousand pounds, which he stated was to be vested for the child's use, and advanced in such portions as his board and education might require. In the event of any correspondence on his account being necessary, as in case of death or the like, he directed that communication should be made to Signior Matthias Monçada, under cover to a certain banking-house in London.

"But beware," he said to Gray, "how you trouble me about these concerns, unless in case of absolute necessity."

"You need not fear, sir," replied Gray: "I have seen nothing to-day which can induce me to desire a more intimate correspondence with you than may be indispensable."

While Lawford drew up a proper minute of this transaction, by which he himself and Gray were named trustees for

the child, Mr. Gray attempted to restore to the lady the balance of the considerable sum of money which Tresham (if such was his real name) had formerly deposited with him. With every species of gesture by which hands, eyes, and even feet, could express rejection, as well as in her own broken French, she repelled the proposal of reimbursement, while she entreated that Gray would consider the money as his own property; and at the same time forced upon him a ring set with brilliants, which seemed of considerable value. The father then spoke to her a few stern words, which she heard with an air of mingled agony and submission.

"I have given her a few minutes to see and weep over the miserable being which has been the seal of her dishonor," said the stern father. "Let us retire and leave her alone. You," to the messenger, "watch the door of the room on the outside."

Gray, Lawford, and Monçada retired to the parlor accordingly, where they waited in silence, each busied with his own reflections, till, within the space of half an hour, they received information that the lady was ready to depart.

"It is well," replied Monçada; "I am glad she has yet sense enough left to submit to that which needs must be."

So saying, he ascended the stair, and returned, leading down his daughter, now again masked and veiled. As she passed Gray she uttered the words, "My child—my child!" in a tone of unutterable anguish; then entered the carriage, which was drawn up as close to the door of the doctor's house as the little enclosure would permit. The messenger, mounted on a led horse, and accompanied by a servant and assistant, followed the carriage, which drove rapidly off, taking the road which leads to Edinburgh. All who had witnessed this strange scene now departed to make their conjectures, and some to count their gains; for money had been distributed among the females who had attended on the lady with so much liberality as considerably to reconcile them to the breach of the rights of womanhood inflicted by the precipitate removal of the patient.

CHAPTER II

THE last cloud of dust which the wheels of the carriage had raised was dissipated, when dinner, which claims a share of human thoughts even in the midst of the most marvelous and affecting incidents, recurred to those of Mrs. Gray.

"Indeed, doctor, you will stand glowering out of the window till some other patient calls for you, and then have to set off without your dinner. And I hope Mr. Lawford will take potluck with us, for it is just his own hour; and indeed we had something rather better than ordinary for this poor lady—lamb and spinage and a veal florentine."

The surgeon started as from a dream, and joined in his wife's hospitable request, to which Lawford willingly assented.

We will suppose the meal finished, a bottle of old and generous Antigua upon the table, and a modest little punch-bowl judiciously replenished for the accommodation of the doctor and his guest. Their conversation naturally turned on the strange scene which they had witnessed, and the town-clerk took considerable merit for his presence of mind.

"I am thinking, doctor," said he, "you might have brewed a bitter browst to yourself if I had not come in as I did."

"Troth, and it might very well so be," answered Gray; "for, to tell you the truth, when I saw yonder fellow vaporing with his pistols among the women folk in my own house, the old Cameronian spirit began to rise in me, and little thing would have made me cleek to the poker."

"Hoot—hoot! that would never have done. Na—na," said the man of law, "this was a case where a little prudence was worth all the pistols and pokers in the world."

"And that was just what I thought when I sent to you, Clerk Lawford," said the doctor.

"A wiser man he could not have called on to a difficult case," added Mrs. Gray, as she sat with her work at a little distance from the table.

"Thanks t'ye, and here's t'ye, my good neighbor," answered the scribe; "will you not let me help you to another glass of punch, Mrs. Gray?" This being declined, he pro-

ceeded. "I am jalousing that the messenger and his warrant were just brought in to prevent any opposition. Ye saw how quietly he behaved after I had laid down the law; I'll never believe the lady is in any risk from him. But the father is a dour chield; depend upon it, he has bred up the young filly on the curb-rein, and that has made the poor thing start off the course. I should not be surprised that he took her abroad and shut her up in a convent."

"Hardly," replied Doctor Gray, "if it be true, as I suspect, that both the father and daughter are of the Jewish persuasion."

"A Jew!" said Mrs. Gray; "and have I been taking a' this fyke about a Jew? I thought she seemed to gie a scunner at the eggs and bacon that Nurse Simson spoke about to her. But I thought Jews had aye had lang beards, and yon man's face is just like one of our ain folks." I have seen the doctor with a langer beard himsell, when he has not had leisure to shave."

"That might have been Mr. Monçada's case," said Lawford, "for he seemed to have had a hard journey. But the Jews are often very respectable people, Mrs. Gray; they have no territorial property, because the law is against them there, but they have a good hank in the money market—plenty of stock in the funds, Mrs. Gray; and, indeed, I think this poor young woman is better with her ain father, though he be a Jew and a dour chield into the bargain, than she would have been with the loon that wranged her, who is, by your account, Dr. Gray, baith a Papist and a rebel. The Jews are well attached to government; they hate the Pope, the Devil, and the Pretender as much as any honest man among ourselves."

"I cannot admire either of the gentlemen," said Gideon. "But it is but fair to say, that I saw Mr. Monçada when he was highly incensed, and to all appearance not without reason. Now, this other man, Tresham, if that be his name, was haughty to me, and I think something careless of the poor young woman, just at the time when he owed her most kindness, and me some thankfulness. I am, therefore, of your opinion, Clerk Lawford, that the Christian is the worse bargain of the two."

"And you think of taking care of this wean yourself, doctor? That is what I call the good Samaritan."

"At cheap cost, clerk: the child, if it lives, has enough to bring it up decently, and set it out in life, and I can teach it an honorable and useful profession. It will be rather an

amusement than a trouble to me, and I want to make some remarks on the childish diseases, which, with God's blessing, the child must come through under my charge; and since Heaven has sent us no children——"

"Hoot—hoot!" said the town-clerk, "you are in ower great a hurry now—you havena been sae lang married yet. Mrs. Gray, dinna let my daffing chase you away; we will be for a dish of tea belive, for the doctor and I are nae glass-breakers."

Four years after this conversation took place the event happened at the possibility of which the town-clerk had hinted; and Mrs. Gray presented her husband with an infant daughter. But good and evil are strangely mingled in this sublunary world. The fulfilment of this anxious longing for posterity was attended with the loss of his simple and kind-hearted wife, one of the most heavy blows which fate could inflict on poor Gideon, and his house was made desolate even by the event which had promised for months before to add new comforts to its humble roof. Gray felt the shock as men of sense and firmness feel a decided blow, from the effects of which they never hope again fully to raise themselves. He discharged the duties of his profession with the same punctuality as ever, was easy, and even to appearance cheerful, in his intercourse with society; but the sunshine of existence was gone. Every morning he missed the affectionate charges which recommended to him to pay attention to his own health while he was laboring to restore that blessing to his patients. Every evening, as he returned from his weary round, it was without the consciousness of a kind and affectionate reception from one eager to tell, and interested to hear, all the little events of the day. His whistle, which used to arise clear and strong so soon as Middlemas steeple was in view, was now forever silenced, and the rider's head drooped, while the tired horse, lacking the stimulus of his master's hand and voice, seemed to shuffle along as if it experienced a share of his despondency. There were times when he was so much dejected as to be unable to endure even the presence of his little Menie, in whose infant countenance he could trace the lineaments of the mother, of whose loss she had been the innocent and unconscious cause. "Had it not been for this poor child——" he would think; but, instantly aware that the sentiment was sinful, he would snatch the infant to his breast and load it with caresses, then hastily desire it to be removed from the parlor.

The Mahometans have a fanciful idea that the true believer, in his passage to Paradise, is under the necessity of passing barefooted over a bridge composed of red-hot iron. But on this occasion all the pieces of paper which the Moslem has preserved during his life, lest some holy thing being written upon them might be profaned, arrange themselves between his feet and the burning metal, and so save him from injury. In the same manner, the effects of kind and benevolent actions are sometimes found, even in this world, to assuage the pangs of subsequent afflictions.

Thus, the greatest consolation which poor Gideon could find after his heavy deprivation was in the frolic fondness of Richard Middlemas, the child who was in so singular a manner thrown upon his charge. Even at this early age he was eminently handsome. When silent or out of humor, his dark eyes and striking countenance presented some recollections of the stern character imprinted on the features of his supposed father; but when he was gay and happy, which was much more frequently the case, these clouds were exchanged for the most frolicsome, mirthful expression that ever dwelt on the laughing and thoughtless aspect of a child. He seemed to have a tact beyond his years in discovering and conforming to the peculiarities of human character. His nurse, one prime object of Richard's observance, was Nurse Jamieson, or, as she was more commonly called for brevity, and *par excellence,* Nurse. This was the person who had brought him up from infancy. She had lost her own child, and soon after her husband, and being thus a lone woman, had, as used to be common in Scotland, remained a member of Dr. Gray's family. After the death of his wife, she gradually obtained the principal superintendence of the whole household; and being an honest and capable manager, was a person of very great importance in the family.

She was bold in her temper, violent in her feelings, and, as often happens with those in her condition, was as much attached to Richard Middlemas, whom she had once nursed at her bosom, as if he had been her own son. This affection the child repaid by all the tender attention of which his age was capable.

Little Dick was also distinguished by the fondest and kindest attachment to his guardian and benefactor, Dr. Gray. He was officious in the right time and place, quiet as a lamb when his patron seemed inclined to study or to muse, active and assiduous to assist or divert him whenever

it seemed to be wished, and in choosing his opportunities he seemed to display an address far beyond his childish years.

As time passed on, this pleasing character seemed to be still more refined. In everything like exercise or amusement he was the pride and the leader of the boys of the place, over the most of whom his strength and activity gave him a decided superiority. At school his abilities were less distinguished, yet he was a favorite with the master, a sensible and useful teacher.

"Richard is not swift," he used to say to his patron, Dr. Gray, "but then he is sure; and it is impossible not to be pleased with a child who is so very desirous to give satisfaction."

Young Middlemas's grateful affection to his patron seemed to increase with the expanding of his faculties, and found a natural and pleasing mode of displaying itself in his attentions to little Menie * Gray. Her slightest hint was Richard's law, and it was in vain that he was summoned forth by a hundred shrill voices to take the lead in hye-spye or at football if it was little Menie's pleasure that he should remain within and build card-houses for her amusement. At other times, he would take the charge of the little damsel entirely under his own care, and be seen wandering with her on the borough common, collecting wild flowers or knitting caps made of bulrushes. Menie was attached to Dick Middlemas in proportion to his affectionate assiduities; and the father saw with pleasure every new mark of attention to his child on the part of his *protégé*.

During the time that Richard was silently advancing from a beautiful child into a fine boy, and approaching from a fine boy to the time when he must be termed a handsome youth, Mr. Gray wrote twice a year with much regularity to Mr. Monçada, through the channel that gentleman had pointed out. The benevolent man thought that, if the wealthy grandfather could only see his relative, of whom any family might be proud, he would be unable to persevere in his resolution of treating as an outcast one so nearly connected with him in blood, and so interesting in person and disposition. He thought it his duty, therefore, to keep open the slender and oblique communication with the boy's maternal grandfather, as that which might, at some future period, lead to a closer connection. Yet the correspondence could not, in other respects, be agreeable to a man of spirit

* Marion.

like Mr. Gray. His own letters were as short as possible, merely rendering an account of his ward's expenses, including a moderate board to himself, attested by Mr. Lawford, his co-trustee ; and intimating Richard's state of health, and his progress in education, with a few words of brief but warm eulogy upon his goodness of head and heart. But the answers he received were still shorter. "Mr. Monçada," such was their usual tenor, "acknowledges Mr. Gray's letter of such a date, notices the contents, and requests Mr. Gray to persist in the plan which he has hitherto prosecuted on the subject of their correspondence." On occasions where extraordinary expenses seemed likely to be incurred, the remittances were made with readiness.

That day fortnight after Mrs. Gray's death, fifty pounds were received, with a note, intimating that it was designed to put the child R. M. into proper mourning. The writer had added two or three words, desiring that the surplus should be at Mr. Gray's disposal, to meet the additional expenses of this period of calamity ; but Mr. Monçada had left the phrase unfinished, apparently in despair of turning it suitably into English. Gideon, without farther investigation, quietly added the sum to the account of his ward's little fortune, contrary to the opinion of Mr. Lawford, who, aware that he was rather a loser than a gainer by the boy's residence in his house, was desirous that his friend should not omit an opportunity of recovering some part of his expenses on that score. But Gray was proof against all remonstrance.

As the boy advanced towards his fourteenth year, Dr. Gray wrote a more elaborate account of his ward's character, acquirements, and capacity. He added, that he did this for the purpose of enabling Mr. Monçada to judge how the young man's future education should be directed. Richard, he observed, was arrived at the point where education, losing its original and general character, branches off into different paths of knowledge, suitable to particular professions, and when it was therefore become necessary to determine which of them it was his pleasure that young Richard should be trained for ; and he would, on his part, do all he could to carry Mr. Monçada's wishes into execution, since the amiable qualities of the boy made him as dear to him, though but a guardian, as he could have been to his own father.

The answer, which arrived in the course of a week or ten days, was fuller than usual, and written in the first person. "Mr. Gray," such was the tenor, " our meeting has been

under such circumstances as could not make us favorably known to each other at the time. But I have the advantage of you since, knowing your motives for entertaining an indifferent opinion of me, I could respect them, and you at the same time ; whereas you, unable to comprehend the motives—I say, you, being unacquainted with the infamous treatment I had received, could not understand the reasons that I have for acting as I have done. Deprived, sir, by the act of a villain, of my child, and she despoiled of honor, I cannot bring myself to think of beholding the creature, however innocent, whose look must always remind me of hatred and of shame. Keep the poor child by you, educate him to your own profession, but take heed that he looks no higher than to fill such a situation in life as you yourself worthily occupy, or some other line of like importance. For the condition of a farmer, a country lawyer, a medical practitioner, or some such retired course of life, the means of outfit and education shall be amply supplied. But I must warn him and you that any attempt to intrude himself on me further than I may especially permit will be attended with the total forfeiture of my favor and protection. So, having made known my mind to you, I expect you will act accordingly."

The receipt of this letter determined Gideon to have some explanation with the boy himself, in order to learn if he had any choice among the professions thus opened to him ; convinced, at the same time, from his docility of temper, that he would refer the selection to his (Dr. Gray's) better judgment.

He had previously, however, the unpleasing task of acquainting Richard Middlemas with the mysterious circumstances attending his birth, of which he presumed him to be entirely ignorant, simply because he himself had never communicated them, but had let the boy consider himself as the orphan child of a distant relation. But though the doctor himself was silent, he might have remembered that Nurse Jamieson had the handsome enjoyment of her tongue, and was disposed to use it liberally.

From a very early period Nurse Jamieson, amongst the variety of legendary lore which she instilled into her foster-son, had not forgotten what she called the awful season of his coming into the world ; the personable appearance of his father, a grand gentleman, who looked as if the whole world lay at his feet ; the beauty of his mother, and the terrible blackness of the mask which she more, her een that glanced

like diamonds, and the diamonds she wore on her fingers, that could be compared to nothing but her own een, the fairness of her skin, and the color of her silk rokelay, with much proper stuff to the same purpose. Then she expatiated on the arrival of his grandfather, and the awful man, armed with pistol, dirk, and claymore (the last weapons existed only in Nurse's imagination), the very ogre of a fairy tale; then all the circumstances of the carrying off his mother, while bank-notes were flying about the house like screeds of brown paper, and gold guineas were as plenty as chuckie-stanes. All this, partly to please and interest the boy, partly to indulge her own talent for amplification, Nurse told with so many additional circumstances and gratuitous commentaries, that the real transaction, mysterious and odd as it certainly was, sunk into tameness before the nurse's edition, like humble prose contrasted with the boldest flights of poetry.

To hear all this did Richard seriously incline, and still more was he interested with the idea of his valiant father coming for him unexpectedly at the head of a gallant regiment, with music playing and colors flying, and carrying his son away on the most beautiful pony eyes ever beheld; or his mother, bright as the day, might suddenly appear in her coach-and-six, to reclaim her beloved child; or his repentant grandfather, with his pockets stuffed out with bank-notes, would come to atone for his past cruelty, by heaping his neglected grandchild with unexpected wealth. Sure was Nurse Jamieson "that it wanted but a blink of her bairn's bonny ee to turn their hearts, as Scripture sayeth; and as strange things had been, as they should come a'thegither to the town at the same time, and make such a day as had never been seen in Middlemas; and then her bairn would never be called by that Lowland name of Middlemas any more, which sounded as if it had been gathered out of the town gutter; but would be called Galatian,* or Sir William Wallace, or Robin Hood, or after some other of the great princes named in story-books."

Nurse Jamieson's history of the past and prospects of the future were too flattering not to excite the most ambitious visions in the mind of a boy who naturally felt a strong desire of rising in the world, and was conscious of possessing the powers necessary to his advancement. The incidents of his birth resembled those he found commemorated in the

* Galatian is a name of a person famous in Christmas gambols.

tales which he read or listened to; and there seemed no reason why his own adventures should not have a termination corresponding to those of such veracious histories. In a word, while good Doctor Gray imagined that his pupil was dwelling in utter ignorance of his origin, Richard was meditating upon nothing else than the time and means by which he anticipated his being extricated from the obscurity of his present condition, and enable to assume the rank to which, in his own opinion, he was entitled by birth.

So stood the feelings of the young man, when, one day after dinner, the doctor, snuffing the candle, and taking from his pouch the great leathern pocket-book in which he deposited particular papers, with a small supply of the most necessary and active medicines, he took from it Mr. Monçada's letter, and requested Richard Middlemas's serious attention, while he told him some circumstances concerning himself, which it greatly imported him to know. Richard's dark eyes flashed fire, the blood flushed his broad and well-formed forehead—the hour of explanation was at length come. He listened to the narrative of Gideon Gray, which, the reader may believe, being altogether divested of the gilding which Nurse Jamieson's imagination had bestowed upon it, and reduced to what mercantile men termed the "needful," exhibited little more than the tale of a child of shame, deserted by its father and mother, and brought up on the reluctant charity of a more distant relation, who regarded him as the living, though unconscious, evidence of the disgrace of his family, and would more willingly have paid for the expenses of his funeral than that of the food which was grudgingly provided for him. "Temple and tower," a hundred flattering edifices of Richard's childish imagination, went to the ground at once, and the pain which attended their demolition was rendered the more acute by a sense of shame that he should have nursed such reveries. He remained, while Gideon continued his explanation, in a dejected posture, his eyes fixed on the ground, and the veins of his forehead swollen with contending passions.

"And now, my dear Richard," said the good surgeon, "you must think what you can do for yourself, since your grandfather leaves you the choice of three honorable professions, by any of which, well and wisely prosecuted, you may become independent if not wealthy, and respectable if not great. You will naturally desire a little time for consideration."

"Not a minute," said the boy, raising his head and look-

ing boldly at his guardian. "I am a free-born Englishman, and will return to England if I think fit."

"A free-born fool you are," said Gray. "You were born, as I think, and no one can know better than I do, in the blue room of Stevenlaw's Land, in the townhead of Middlemas, if you call that being a free born Englishman."

"But Tom Hillary"—this was an apprentice of Clerk Lawford, who had of late been a great friend and adviser of young Middlemas—"Tom Hillary says that I am a free-born Englishman, notwithstanding, in right of my parents."

"Pooh, child! what do we know of your parents? But what has your being an Englishman to do with the present question?"

"Oh, doctor!" answered the boy, bitterly, "you know we from the south side of Tweed cannot scramble so hard as you do. The Scots are too moral, and too prudent, and too robust for a poor pudding-eater to live amongst them, whether as a parson, or as a lawyer, or as a doctor—with your pardon, sir."

"Upon my life, Dick," said Gray, "this Tom Hillary will turn your brain. What is the meaning of all this trash?"

"Tom Hillary says that the parson lives by the sins of the people, the lawyer by their distresses, and the doctor by their diseases—always asking your pardon, sir."

"Tom Hillary," replied the doctor, "should be drummed out of the borough. A whipper-snapper of an attorney's apprentice, run away from Newcastle! If I hear him talking so, I'll teach him to speak with more reverence of the learned professions. Let me hear no more of Tom Hillary, whom you have seen far too much of lately. Think a little, like a lad of sense, and tell me what answer I am to give Mr. Monçada."

"Tell him," said the boy, the tone of affected sarcasm laid aside, and that of injured pride substituted in its room—"tell him that my soul revolts at the obscure lot he recommends to me. I am determined to enter my father's profession, the army, unless my grandfather chooses to receive me into his house and place me in his own line of business."

"Yes, and make you his partner, I suppose, and acknowledge you for his heir?" said Dr. Gray; "a thing extremely likely to happen, no doubt, considering the way in which he has brought you up all along, and the terms in which he now writes concerning you."

"Then, sir, there is one thing which I can demand of you," replied the boy. "There is a large sum of money in your hands belonging to me; and since it is consigned to you for my use, I demand you should make the necessary advances to procure a commission in the army, account to me for the balance; and so, with thanks for past favors, I will give you no trouble in future."

"Young man," said the doctor, gravely, "I am very sorry to see that your usual prudence and good humor are not proof against the disappointment of some idle expectations which you had not the slighest reason to entertain. It is very true that there is a sum which, in spite of various expenses, may still approach to a thousand pounds or better, which remains in my hands for your behoof. But I am bound to dispose of it according to the will of the donor; and, at any rate, you are not entitled to call for it until you come to years of discretion—a period from which you are six years distant according to law, and which, in one sense, you will never reach at all, unless you alter your present unreasonable crochets. But come, Dick, this is the first time I have seen you in so absurd a humor, and you have many things, I own, in your situation to apologize for impatience even greater than you have displayed. But you should not turn your resentment on me, that am no way in fault. You should remember that I was your earliest and only friend, and took charge of you when every other person forsook you."

"I do not thank you for it," said Richard, giving way to a burst of uncontrolled passion. "You might have done better for me had you pleased."

"And in what manner, you ungrateful boy?" said Gray, whose composure was a little ruffled.

"You might have flung me under the wheels of their carriages as they drove off, and have let them trample on the body of their child, as they have done on his feelings."

So saying, he rushed out of the room, and shut the door behind him with great violence, leaving his guardian astonished at his sudden and violent change of temper and manner.

"What the deuce could have possessed him? Ah, well. High spirited, and disappointed in some follies which that Tom Hillary has put into his head. But his is a case for anodynes, and shall be treated accordingly."

While the doctor formed this good-natured resolution, young Middlemas rushed to Nurse Jamieson's apartment,

where poor Menie, to whom his presence always gave holyday feelings, hastened to exhibit for his admiration a new doll, of which she had made the acquisition. No one, generally, was more interested in Menie's amusements than Richard; but at present Richard, like his celebrated namesake, was not i' the vein. He threw off the little damsel so carelessly, almost so rudely, that the doll flew out of Menie's hand, fell on the hearthstone, and broke its waxen face. The rudeness drew from Nurse Jamieson a rebuke, even although the culprit was her darling.

"Hout awa', Richard, that wasna like yoursell, to guide Miss Menie that gate. Haud your tongue, Miss Menie, and I'll soon mend the baby's face."

But if Menie cried, she did not cry for the doll; and while the tears flowed silently down her cheeks, she sat looking at Dick Middlemas with a childish face of fear, sorrow and wonder. Nurse Jamieson was soon diverted from her attention to Menie Gray's distresses, especially as she did not weep aloud, and her attention became fixed on the altered countenance, red eyes, and swollen features of her darling foster-child. She instantly commenced an investigation into the cause of his distress, after the usual inquisitorial manner of matrons of her class. "What is the matter wi' my bairn?" and "Wha has been vexing my bairn?" with similar questions, at last extorted this reply—

"I am not your bairn—I am no one's bairn—no one's son. I am an outcast from my family, and belong to no one. Dr. Gray has told me so himself."

"And did he cast up to my bairn that he was a bastard? Troth he wasna blate. My certie, your father was a better man than ever stood on the doctor's shanks—a handsome grand gentleman, with an ee like a gled's and a step like a Highland piper."

Nurse Jamieson had got on a favorite topic, and would have expatiated long enough, for she was a professed admirer of masculine beauty, but there was something which displeased the boy in her last simile; so he cut the conversation short by asking whether she knew exactly how much money his grandfather had left with Dr. Gray for his maintenance. "She could not say—didna ken—an awfu' sum it was to pass out of a man's hand. She was sure it wasna less than ae hundred pounds, and it might weel be twa." In short, she knew nothing about the matter; "but she was sure Dr. Gray would count to him to the last farthing, for everybody kenn'd that he was a just man where siller was

concerned. However, if her bairn wanted to ken mair about it, to be sure the town-clerk could tell him all about it."

Richard Middlemas arose and left the apartment, without saying more. He went immediately to visit the old town-clerk, to whom he had made himself acceptable, as indeed he had done to most of the dignitaries about the burgh. He introduced the conversation by the proposal which had been made to him for choosing a profession, and after speaking of the mysterious circumstances of his birth and the doubtful prospects which lay before him, he easily led the town-clerk into conversation as to the amount of the funds, and heard the exact state of the money in his guardian's hands, which corresponded with the information he had already received. He next sounded the worthy scribe on the possibility of his going into the army; but received a second confirmation of the intelligence Mr. Gray had given him, being informed that no part of the money could be placed at his disposal till he was of age, and then not without the especial consent of both his guardians, and particularly that of his master. He therefore took leave of the town-clerk, who, much approving the cautious manner in which he spoke, and his prudent selection of an adviser at this important crisis of his life, intimated to him that, should he choose the law, he would himself receive him into his office upon a very moderate apprentice-fee, and would part with Tom Hillary to make room for him, as the lad was "rather pragmatical, and plagued him with speaking about his English practise which they had nothing to do with on this side of the Border—the Lord be thanked!"

Middlemas thanked him for his kindness, and promised to consider his kind offer, in case he should determine upon following the profession of the law.

From Tom Hillary's master, Richard went to Tom Hillary himself, who chanced then to be in the office. He was a lad about twenty, as smart as small, but distinguished for the accuracy with which he dressed his hair, and the splendor of a laced hat and embroidered waistcoat, with which he graced the church of Middlemas on Sundays. Tom Hillary had been bred an attorney's clerk in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, but, for some reason or other, had found it more conevenient of late years to reside in Scotland, and was recommended to the town-clerk of Middlemas by the accuracy and beauty with which he transcribed the records of the burgh. It is

not improbable that the reports concerning the singular circumstances of Richard Middlemas's birth, and the knowledge that he was actually possessed of a considerable sum of money, induced Hillary, though so much his senior, to admit the lad to his company, and enrich his youthful mind with some branches of information which, in that retired corner, his pupil might otherwise have been some time in attaining. Amongst these were certain games at cards and dice, in which the pupil paid, as was reasonable, the price of initiation by his losses to his instructor. After a long walk with this youngster, whose advice, like the unwise son of the wisest of men, he probably valued more than that of his more aged counselors, Richard Middlemas returned to his lodgings in Stevenlaw's Land, and went to bed sad and supperless.

The next morning Richard arose with the sun, and his night's rest appeared to have had its frequent effect, in cooling the passions and correcting the understanding. Little Menie was thefirst person to whom he made the *amende honorable;* and a much smaller propitiation than the new doll with which he presented her would have been accepted as an atonement for a much greater offense. Menie was one of those pure spirits to whom a state of unkindness, if the estranged person has been a friend, is a state of pain, and the slightest advance of her friend and protector was sufficient to regain all her childish confidence and affection.

The father did not prove more inexorable than Menie had done. Mr. Gray, indeed, thought he had good reason to look cold upon Richard at their next meeting, being not a little hurt at the ungrateful treatment which he had received on the preceding evening. But Middlemas disarmed him at once by frankly pleading that he had suffered his mind to be carried away by the supposed rank and importance of his parents into an idle conviction that he was one day to share them. The letter of his grandfather, which condemned him to banishment and obscurity for life, was, he acknowledged, a very severe blow; and it was with deep sorrow that he reflected that the irritation of his disappointment had led him to express himself in a manner far short of the respect and reverence of one who owed Mr. Gray the duty and affection of a son, and ought to refer to his decision every action of his life. Gideon, propitiated by an admission so candid, and made with so much humility, readily dismissed his resentment, and kindly inquired of Richard whether he had bestowed any reflection upon the choice of profession

which had been subjected to him ; offering, at the same time, to allow him all resonable time to make up his mind.

On this subject, Richard Middlemas answered with the same promptitude and candor. "He had," he said, "in order to forming his opinion more safely, consulted with his friend, the town-clerk." The doctor nodded approbation. "Mr. Lawford had, indeed, been most friendly, and had even offered to take him into his own office. But if his father and benefactor would permit him to study, under his instructions, the noble art in which he himself enjoyed such a deserved reputation, the mere hope that he might by and by be of some use to Mr. Gray in his business would greatly overbalance every other consideration. Such a course of education, and such a use of professional knowledge when he had acquired it would be a greater spur to his industry than the prospect even of becoming town-clerk of Middlemas in his proper person."

As the young man expressed it to be his firm and unalterable choice to study medicine under his guardian, and to remain a member of his family, Dr. Gray informed Mr. Monçada of the lad's determination ; who, to testify his approbation, remitted to the doctor the sum of £100 as apprentice-fee—a sum nearly three times as much as Gray's modesty had hinted at as necessary.

Shortly after, when Dr. Gray and the town-clerk met at the small club of the burgh, their joint theme was the sense and steadiness of Richard Middlemas.

"Indeed," said the town-clerk, "he is such a friendly and disinterested boy, that I could not get him to accept a place in my office for fear he should be thought to be pushing himself forward at the expense of Tam Hillary."

"And, indeed, clerk," said Gray, "I have sometimes been afraid that he kept too much company with that Tam Hillary of yours ; but twenty Tam Hillarys would not corrupt Dick Middlemas."

CHAPTER III

> Dick was come to high renown
> Since he commenced physician;
> Tom was held by all the town
> The better politician.
>
> *Tom and Dick.*

At the same poriod when Dr. Gray took under his charge his youthful lodger Richard Middlemas, he received proposals from the friends of one Adam Hartley to receive him also as an apprentice. The lad was the son of a respectable farmer on the English side of the Border, who, educating his eldest son to his own occupation, desired to make his second a medical man, in order to avail himself of the friendship of a great man, his landlord, who had offered to assist his views in life, and represented a doctor or surgeon as the sort of person to whose advantage his interest could be most readily applied. Middlemas and Hartly were therefore associated in their studies. In winter they were boarded in Edinburgh, for attending the medical classes, which were necessary for taking their degree. Three or four years thus passed on, and, from being mere boys, the two medical aspirants shot up into young men, who, being both very good-looking, well dressed, well bred, and having money in their pockets, became personages of some importance in the little town of Middlemas, where there was scarce anything that could be termed an aristocracy, and in which beaux were scarce and belles were plenty.

Each of the two had his especial partisans; for, though the young men themselves lived in tolerable harmony together, yet, as usual in such cases, no one could approve of one of them without at the same time comparing him with, and asserting his superiority over, his companion.

Both were gay, fond of dancing, and sedulous attendants on the "practeezings," as he called them, of Mr. M'Fittoch, a dancing-master who, itinerant during the summer, became stationary in the winter season, and afforded the youth of Middlemas the benefit of his instructions at the rate of twenty lessons for five shillings sterling. On these occasions each

of Dr. Gray's pupils had his appropriate praise. Hartley danced with most spirit, Middlemas with a better grace. Mr. M'Fittoch would have turned out Richard against the countryside in the minuet, and wagered the thing dearest to him in the world, and that was his kit, upon his assured superiority; but he admitted Hartley was superior to him in hornpipe, jigs, strathspeys, and reels.

In dress Hartley was most expensive, perhaps because his father afforded him better means of being so; but his clothes were neither so tasteful when new nor so well preserved when they began to grow old as those of Richard Middlemas. Adam Hartley was sometimes fine, at other times rather slovenly, and on the former occasions was rather too conscious of his splendor. His chum was at all times regularly neat and well dressed; while at the same time he had an air of good-breeding, which made him appear always at ease; so that his dress, whatever it was, seemed to be just what he ought to have worn at the time.

In their persons there was a still more strongly-marked distinction. Adam Hartley was full middle-size, stout, and well-limbed; and an open English countenance, of the genuine Saxon mold, showed itself among chestnut locks until the hairdresser destroyed them. He loved the rough exercises of wrestling, boxing, leaping, and quarter-staff, and frequented, when he could obtain leisure, the bull-baitings and football matches by which the burgh was sometimes enlivened.

Richard, on the contrary, was dark, like his father and mother, with high features, beautifully formed, but exhibiting something of a foreign character; and his person was tall and slim, though muscular and active. His address and manners must have been natural to him, for they were, in elegance and ease, far beyond any example which he could have found in his native burgh. He learned the use of the small-sword while in Edinburgh, and took lessons from a performer at the theater, with the purpose of refining his mode of speaking. He became also an amateur of the drama, regularly attending the playhouse, and assuming the tone of a critic in that and other lighter departments of literature. To fill up the contrast, so far as taste was concerned, Richard was a dexterous and successful angler, Adam a bold and unerring shot. Their efforts to surpass each other in supplying Dr. Gray's table rendered his housekeeping much preferable to what it had been on former occasions; and, besides, small presents of fish and game are always agreeable

amongst the inhabitants of a country town, and contributed to increase the popularity of the young sportsmen.

While the burgh was divided, for lack of better subject of disputation, concerning the comparative merits of Dr. Gray's two apprentices, he himself was sometimes chosen the referee. But in this, as on other matters, the doctor was cautious. He said the lads were both good lads, and would be useful men in the profession if their heads were not carried with the notice which the foolish people of the burgh took of them, and the parties of pleasure that were so often taking them away from their business. No doubt it was natural for him to feel more confidence in Hartley, who came of "kenned folk," and was very near as good as a born Scotchman. But if he did feel such a partiality, he blamed himself for it, since the stranger child, so oddly cast upon his hands, had peculiar good right to such patronage and affection as he had to bestow ; and truly the young man himself seemed so grateful that it was impossible for him to hint the slightest wish that Dick Middlemas did not hasten to execute.

There were persons in the burgh of Middlemas who were indiscreet enough to suppose that Miss Menie must be a better judge than any other person of the comparative merits of these accomplished personages, respecting which the public opinion was generally divided. No one even of her greatest intimates ventured to put the question to her in precise terms ; but her conduct was narrowly observed, and the critics remarked that to Adam Hartley her attentions were given more freely and frankly. She laughed with him, chatted with him, and danced with him ; while to Dick Middlemas her conduct was more shy and distant. The premises seemed certain ; but the public were divided in the conclusions which were to be drawn from them.

It was not possible for the young men to be the subject of such discussions without being sensible that they existed ; and thus contrasted together by the little society in which they moved, they must have been made of better than ordinary clay if they had not themselves entered by degrees into the spirit of the controversy, and considered themselves as rivals for public applause.

Nor is it to be forgotten that Menie Gray was by this time shot up into one of the prettiest young women, not of Middlemas only, but of the whole county in which the little burgh is situated. This, indeed, had been settled by evidence which could not be esteemed short of decisive. At the time of the races there were usually assembled in the burgh some

company of the higher classes from the country around, and many of the sober burghers mended their incomes by letting their apartments, or taking in lodgers of quality, for the busy week. All the rural thanes and thanesses attended on these occasions; and such was the number of cocked hats and silken trains, that the little town seemed for a time totally to have changed its inhabitants. On this occasion persons of a certain quality only were permitted to attend upon the nightly balls which were given in the old town-house, and the line of distinction excluded Mr. Gray's family.

The aristocracy, however, used their privileges with some feelings of deference to the native beaux and belles of the burgh, who were thus doomed to hear the fiddles nightly without being permitted to dance to them. One evening in the race-week, termed the Hunters' Ball, was dedicated to general amusement, and liberated from the usual restrictions of etiquette. On this occasion all the respectable families in the town were invited to share the amusement of the evening, and to wonder at the finery, and be grateful for the condescension, of their betters. This was especially the case with the females, for the number of invitations to the gentlemen of the town was much more limited. Now, at this general muster, the beauty of Miss Gray's face and person had placed her, in the opinion of all competent judges, decidedly at the head of all the belles present, saving those with whom, according to the ideas of the place, it would hardly have been decent to compare her.

The laird of the ancient and distinguished house of Louponheight did not hesitate to engage her hand during the greater part of the evening; and his mother, renowned for her stern assertion of the distinctions of rank, placed the little plebeian beside her at supper, and was heard to say that the surgeon's daughter behaved very prettily indeed, and seemed to know perfectly well where and what she was. As for the young laird himself, he capered so high, and laughed so uproariously, as to give rise to a rumor that he was minded to "shoot madly from his sphere," and to convert the village doctor's daughter into a lady of his own ancient name.

During this memorable evening, Middlemas and Hartley, who had found room in the music gallery, witnessed the scene, and, as it would seem, with very different feelings. Hartley was evidently annoyed by the excess of attention which the gallant laird of Louponheight, stimulated by the influence of a couple of bottles of claret and by the presence

of a partner who danced remarkably well, paid to Miss Menie Gray. He saw from his lofty stand all the dumb show of gallantry with the comfortable feelings of a famishing creature looking upon a feast which he is not permitted to share, and regarded every extraordinary frisk of the jovial laird as the same might have been looked upon by a gouty person, who apprehended that the dignitary was about to descend on his toes. At length, unable to restrain his emotion, he left the gallery and returned no more.

Far different was the demeanor of Middlemas. He seemed gratified and elevated by the attention which was generally paid to Miss Gray, and by the admiration she excited. On the valiant laird of Louponheight he looked with indescribable contempt, and amused himself with pointing out to the burgh dancing-master, who acted *pro tempore* as one of the band, the frolicsome bounds and pirouettes, in which that worthy displayed a great deal more of vigor than of grace.

"But ye shouldna laugh sae loud, Master Dick," said the master of capers; "he hasna had the advantage of a real gracefu' teacher, as ye have had; and troth, if he listed to tak some lessons, I think I could make some hand of his feet, for he is a souple chield, and has a gallant instep of his ain; and sic a laced hat hasna been seen on the causeway of Middlemas this mony a day. Ye are standing laughing there, Dick Middlemas; I would have you be sure he does not cut you out with your bonny partner yonder."

"He be——!" Middlemas was beginning a sentence which could not have concluded with strict attention to propriety, when the master of the band summoned M'Fittoch to his post by the following ireful expostulation—"What are ye about, sir? Mind your bow-hand. How the deil d'ye think three fiddles is to keep down a bass, if yin o' them stands girning and gabbling as ye're doing? Play up, sir!"

Dick Middlemas, thus reduced to silence, continued, from his lofty station, like one of the gods of the Epicureans, to survey what passed below, without the gaieties which he witnessed being able to excite more than a smile, which seemed, however, rather to indicate a good-humored contempt for what was passing than a benevolent sympathy with the pleasures of others.

CHAPTER IV

Now hold thy tongue, Billy Bewick, he said,
Of peaceful talking let me be ;
But if thou art a man, as I think thou art,
Come ower the dike and fight with me.
Borderly Minstreslsy.

On the morning after this gay evening, the two young men were laboring together in a plot of ground behind Stevenlaw's Land which the doctor had converted into a garden, where he raised, with a view to pharmacy as well as botany, some rare plants, which obtained the place from the vulgar the sounding name of the Physic Garden.* Mr. Gray's pupils readily complied with his wishes, that they would take some care of this favorite spot, to which both contributed their labors, after which Hartley used to devote himself to the cultivation of the kitchen garden, which he had raised into this respectability from a spot not excelling a common kail-yard, while Richard Middlemas did his utmost to decorate with flowers and shrubs a sort of arbor, usually called Miss Menie's bower.

At present, they were both in the botanic patch of the garden, when Dick Middlemas asked Hartley why he had left the ball so soon the evening before.

"I should rather ask you," said Hartley, "what pleasure you felt in staying there ? I tell you, Dick, it is a shabby, low place this Middlemas of ours. In the smallest burgh in England every decent freeholder would have been asked if the member gave a ball."

"What, Hartley !" said his companion, "are you, of all men, a candidate for the honor of mixing with the first-born of the earth ? Mercy on us ! How will canny Northumberland (throwing a true Northern accent on the letter R) acquit himself ? Methinks I see thee in thy pea-green suit, dancing a jig with the Honorable Miss Maddie MacFudgeon, while chiefs and thanes around laugh as they would do at a hog in armor !"

"You don't, or perhaps you won't understand me," said

* The Botany Garden was so termed by the vulgar of Edinburgh.

Hartley. "I am not such a fool as to desire to be hail-fellow-well-met with these fine folks: I care as little for them as they do for me. But as they do not choose to ask us to dance, I don't see what business they have with our partners."

"Partners, said you!" answered Middlemas; "I don't think Menie is very often yours."

"As often as I ask her," answered Hartley, rather haughtily.

"Ay? Indeed? I did not think that. And hang me if I think so yet," said Middlemas, with the same sarcastic tone. "I tell thee, Adam, I will bet you a bowl of punch that Miss Gray will not dance with you the next time you ask her. All I stipulate is to know the day."

"I will lay no bets about Miss Gray," said Hartley; "her father is my master, and I am obliged to him—I think I should act very scurvily if I were to make her the subject of any idle debate betwixt you and me."

"Very right," replied Middlemas; "you should finish one quarrel before you begin another. Pray, saddle your pony, ride up to the gate of Louponheight Castle, and defy the baron to mortal combat for having presumed to touch the fair hand of Menie Gray."

"I wish you would leave Miss Gray's name out of the question, and take your defiances to your fine folks in your own name, and see what they will say to the surgeon's apprentice."

"Speak for yourself, if you please, Mr. Adam Hartley. I was not born a clown, like some folks, and should care little, if I saw it fit, to talk to the best of them at the ordinary, and make myself understood too."

"Very likely," answered Hartley, losing patience; "you are one of themselves, you know—Middlemas of that Ilk."

"You scoundrel!" said Richard, advancing on him in fury, his taunting humor entirely changed into rage.

"Stand back," said Hartley, "or you will come by the worst; if you will break rude jests, you must put up with rough answers."

"I will have satisfaction for this insult, by Heaven!"

"Why, so you shall, if you insist on it," said Hartley; "but better, I think, to say no more about the matter. We have both spoken what would have been better left unsaid. I was in the wrong to say what I said to you, although you did provoke me. And now I have given you as much satisfaction as a reasonable man can ask."

"Sir," repeated Middlemas, "the satisfaction which I demand is that of a gentleman: the doctor has a pair of pistols."

"And a pair of mortars also, which are heartily at your service, gentlemen," said Mr. Gray, coming forward from behind a yew hedge, where he had listened to the whole or greater part of this dispute. "A fine story it would be of my apprentices shooting each other with my own pistols! Let me see either of you fit to treat a gunshot wound before you think of inflicting one. Go, you are both very foolish boys, and I cannot take it kind of either of you to bring the name of my daughter into such disputes as these. Harkye, lads, ye both owe me, I think, some portion of respect, and even of gratitude; it will be a poor return if, instead of living quietly with this poor motherless girl, like brothers with a sister, you should oblige me to increase my expense, and abridge my comfort, by sending my child from me for the few months that you are to remain here. Let me see you shake hands, and let us have no more of this nonsense."

While their master spoke in this manner, both the young men stood before him in the attitude of self-convicted criminals. At the conclusion of his rebuke, Hartley turned frankly round and offered his hand to his companion, who accepted it, but after a moment's hesitation. There was nothing further passed on the subject, but the lads never resumed the same sort of intimacy which had existed betwixt them in their earlier acquaintance. On the contrary, avoiding every connection not absolutely required by their situation, and abridging as much as possible even their indispensable intercourse in professional matters, they seemed as much estranged from each other as two persons residing in the same small house had the means of being.

As for Menie Gray, her father did not appear to entertain the least anxiety upon her account, although, from his frequent and almost daily absence from home, she was exposed to constant intercourse with two handsome young men, both, it might be supposed, ambitious of pleasing her more than most parents would have deemed entirely prudent. Nor was Nurse Jamieson—her menial situation and her excessive partiality for her foster-son considered—altogether such a matron as could afford her protection. Gideon, however, knew that his daughter possessed, in its fullest extent, the upright and pure integrity of his own character, and that never father had less reason to apprehend that a daughter

should deceive his confidence; and, justly secure of her principles, he overlooked the danger to which he exposed her feelings and affections.

The intercourse betwixt Menie and the young men seemed now of a guarded kind on all sides. Their meeting was only at meals, and Miss Gray was at pains, perhaps by her father's recommendation, to treat them with the same degree of attention. This, however, was no easy matter; for Hartley became so retiring, cold, and formal that it was impossible for her to sustain any prolonged intercourse with him; whereas Middlemas, perfectly at his ease, sustained his part as formerly upon all occasions that occurred, and, without appearing to press his intimacy assiduously, seemed nevertheless to retain the complete possession of it.

The time drew nigh at length when the young men, freed from the engagements of their indentures, must look to play their own independent part in the world. Mr. Gray informed Richard Middlemas that he had written pressingly upon the subject to Monçada, and that more than once, but had not yet received an answer; nor did he presume to offer his own advice until the pleasures of his grandfather should be known. Richard seemed to endure this suspense with more patience than the doctor thought belonged naturally to his character. He asked no questions, stated no conjectures, showed no anxiety, but seemed to await with patience the turn which events should take. "My young gentleman," thought Mr. Gray, "has either fixed on some course in his own mind, or he is about to be more tractable than some points of his character have led me to expect."

In fact, Richard had made an experiment on this inflexible relative, by sending Mr. Monçada a letter full of duty, and affection, and gratitude, desiring to be permitted to correspond with him in person, and promising to be guided in every particular by his will. The answer to this appeal was his own letter returned, with a note from the bankers whose cover had been used, saying, that any future attempt to intrude on Mr. Monçada would put a final period to their remittances.

While things were in this situation in Stevenlaw's Land, Adam Hartley one evening, contrary to his custom for several months, sought a private interview with his fellow-apprentice. He found him in the little arbor, and could not omit observing that Dick Middlemas, on his appearance, shoved into his bosom a small packet, as if afraid of its being seen, and, snatching up a hoe, began to work with great devotion, like

one who wished to have it thought that his whole soul was in his occupation.

"I wished to speak with you, Mr. Middlemas," said Hartley; "but I fear I interrupt you."

"Not in the least," said the other, laying down his hoe; "I was only scratching up the weeds which the late showers have made rush up so numerously. I am at your service."

Hartley proceeded to the arbor, and seated himself. Richard imitated his example, and seemed to wait for the proposed communication.

"I have had an interesting communication with Mr. Gray —" said Hartley, and there stopped, like one who finds himself entering upon a difficult task.

"I hope the explanation has been satisfactory?" said Middlemas.

"You shall judge. Doctor Gray was pleased to say something to me very civil about my proficiency in the duties of our profession; and, to my great astonishment, asked me whether, as he was now becoming old, I had any particular objection to continue in my present situation, but with some pecuniary advantages, for two years longer; at the end of which he promised to me that I should enter into partnership with him.

"Mr. Gray is an undoubted judge," said Middlemas, "what person will best suit him as a professional assistant. The business may be worth £200 a year, and an active assistant might go nigh to double it by riding Strath-Devon and the Carse. No great subject for division after all, Mr. Hartley."

"But," continued Hartley, "that is not all. The doctor says—he proposes—in short, if I can render myself agreeable, in the course of these two years, to Miss Menie Gray—he proposes that, when they terminate, I should become his son as well as his partner."

As he spoke, he kept his eye fixed on Richard's face, which was for a moment strongly agitated; but instantly recovering, he answered, in a tone where pique and offended pride vainly endeavored to disguise themselves under an affectation of indifference, "Well, Master Adam, I cannot but wish you joy of the patriarchal arrangement. You have served five years for a professional diploma—a sort of Leah, that privilege of killing and curing. Now you begin a new course of servitude for a lovely Rachel. Undoubtedly—perhaps it is rude in me to ask—but undoubtedly you have accepted so flattering an arrangement?"

"You cannot but recollect there was a condition annexed," said Hartley, gravely.

"That of rendering yourself acceptable to a girl you have known for so many years?" said Middlemas, with a half-suppressed sneer. "No great difficulty in that, I should think, for such a person as Mr. Hartley, with Doctor Gray's favor to back him. No—no, there could be no great obstacle there."

"Both you and I know the contrary, Mr. Middlemas," said Hartley, very seriously.

"I know! How should I know anything more than yourself about the state of Miss Gray's inclinations?" said Middlemas. "I am sure we have had equal access to know them."

"Perhaps so; but some know better how to avail themselves of opportunities. Mr. Middlemas, I have long suspected that you have had the inestimable advantage of possessing Miss Gray's affections, and—"

"I!" interrupted Middlemas. "You are jesting, or you are jealous. You do yourself less, and me more, than justice; but the compliment is so great that I am obliged to you for the mistake."

"That you may know," answered Hartley, "I do not speak either by guess or from what you call jealousy, I tell you frankly that Menie Gray herself told me the state of her affections. I naturally communicated to her the discourse I had with her father. I told her I was but too well convinced that at the present moment I did not possess that interest in her heart which alone might entitle me to request her acquiescence in the views which her father's goodness held out to me; but I entreated her not at once to decide against me, but give me an opportunity to make way in her affections, if possible, trusting that time, and the services which I should render to her father, might have an ultimate effect in my favor.

"A most natural and modest request. But what did the young lady say in reply?"

"She is a noble-hearted girl, Richard Middlemas; and for her frankness alone, even without her beauty and her good sense, deserves an emperor. I cannot express the graceful modesty with which she told me that she knew too well the kindliness, as she was pleased to call it, of my heart to expose me to the protracted pain of an unrequited passion. She candidly informed me that she had been long engaged to you in secret, that you had exchanged portraits; and though without her father's consent she would never become

yours, yet she felt it impossible that she should ever so far change her sentiments as to afford the most distant prospect of success to another."

"Upon my word," said Middlemas, "she has been extremely candid indeed, and I am very much obliged to her!"

"And upon *my* honest word, Mr. Middlemas," returned Hartley, "you do Miss Gray the greatest injustice—nay, you are ungrateful to her—if you are displeased at her making this declaration. She loves you as a woman loves the first object of her affection; she loves you better——" He stopped, and Middlemas completed the sentence.

"Better than I deserve, perhaps? Faith, it may well be so, and I love her dearly in return. But after all, you know, the secret was mine as well as hers, and it would have been better that she had consulted me before making it public."

"Mr. Middlemas," said Hartley, earnestly, "if the least of this feeling on your part arises from the apprehension that your secret is less safe because it is in my keeping, I can assure you that such is my grateful sense of Miss Gray's goodness, in communicating, to save me pain, an affair of such delicacy to herself and you, that wild horses should tear me limb from limb before they forced a word of it from my lips."

"Nay—nay, my dear friend," said Middlemas, with a frankness of manner indicating a cordiality that had not existed between them for some time, "you must allow me to be a little jealous in my turn. Your true lover cannot have a title to the name unless he be sometimes unreasonable; and somehow it seems odd she should have chosen for a confidant one whom I have often thought a formidable rival; and yet I am so far from being displeased, that I do not know that the dear, sensible girl could after all have made a better choice. It is time that the foolish coldness between us should be ended, as you may be sensible that its real cause lay in our rivalry. I have much need of good advice, and who can give it to me better than the old companion whose soundness of judgment I have always envied, even when some injudicious friends have given me credit for quicker parts!

Hartley accepted Richard's proffered hand, but without any of the buoyancy of spirit with which it was offered.

"I do not intend," he said, "to remain many days in this place, perhaps not very many hours. But if, in the mean-

while, I can benefit you, by advice or otherwise, you may fully command me. It is the only mode in which I can be of service to Menie Gray."

"Love my mistress, love me; a happy pendant to the old proverb, 'Love me, love my dog.' Well, then, for Menie Gray's sake, if not for Dick Middlemas's—plague on that vulgar, tell-tale name!—will you, that are a stander-by, tell us who are the unlucky players what you think of this game of ours?"

"How can you ask such a question, when the field lies so fair before you? I am sure that Dr. Gray would retain you as his assistant upon the same terms which he proposed to me. You are the better match, in all worldly respects, for his daughter, having some capital to begin the world with."

"All true; but methinks Mr. Gray has showed no great predilection for me in this matter."

"If he has done injustice to your indisputable merit," said Hartley, drily, "the preference of his daughter has more than atoned for it."

"Unquestionably; and dearly, therefore, do I love her; otherwise, Adam, I am not a person to grasp at the leavings of other people."

"Richard," replied Hartley, "that pride of yours, if you do not check it, will render you both ungrateful and miserable. Mr. Gray's ideas are most friendly. He told me plainly that his choice of me as an assistant, and as a member of his family, had been a long time balanced by his early affection for you, until he thought he had remarked in you a decisive discontent with such limited prospects as his offer contained, and a desire to go abroad into the world and push, as it is called, your fortune. He said that, although it was very probable that you might love his daughter well enough to relinquish these ambitious ideas for her sake, yet the demons of Ambition and Avarice would return after the exorciser Love had exhausted the force of his spells, and then he thought he would have just reason to be anxious for his daughter's happiness."

"By my faith, the worthy senior speaks scholarly and wisely," answered Richard: "I did not think he had been so clear-sighted. To say the truth, but for the beautiful Menie Gray, I should feel like a mill-horse, walking my daily round in this dull country, while other gay rovers are trying how the world will receive them. For instance, where do you yourself go?"

"A cousin of my mother's commands a ship in the Company's service. I intend to go with him as surgeon's mate. If I like the sea service, I will continue in it; if not, I will enter some other line." This Hartley said with a sigh.

"To India!" answered Richard; "happy dog—to India! You may well bear with equanimity all disappointments sustained on this side of the globe. Oh, Delhi! oh, Golconda! have your names no power to conjure down idle recollections? India, where gold is won by steel; where a brave man cannot pitch his desire of fame and wealth so high but that he may realize it, if he have fortune to his friend? Is it possible that the bold adventurer can fix his thoughts on you, and still be dejected at the thoughts that a bonny blue-eyed lass looked favorably on a less lucky fellow than himself? Can this be?"

"Less lucky!" said Hartley. "Can you, the accepted lover of Menie Gray, speak in that tone, even though it be in jest?"

"Nay, Adam," said Richard, "don't be angry with me because, being thus far successful, I rate my good fortune not quite so rapturously as perhaps you do, who have missed the luck of it. Your philosophy should tell you that the object which we attain, or are sure of attaining, loses, perhaps, even by that very certainty, a little of the extravagant and ideal value which attached to it while the object of feverish hopes and anguish fears. But for all that I cannot live without my sweet Menie. I would wed her to-morrow, with all my soul, without thinking a minute on the clog which so early a marriage would fasten on our heels. But to spend two additional years in this infernal wilderness, cruising after crowns and half-crowns, when worse men are making lacs and crores of rupees—it is a sad falling off, Adam. Counsel me, my friend; can you not suggest some mode of getting off from these two years of destined dulness?"

"Not I," replied Hartley, scarce repressing his displeasure; "and if I could induce Dr. Gray to dispense with so reasonable a condition, I should be very sorry to do so. You are but twenty-one, and if such a period of probation was, in the doctor's prudence, judged necessary for me, who am full two years older, I have no idea that he will dispense with it in yours."

"Perhaps not," replied Middlemas; "but do you not think that these two, or call them three, years of probation had better be spent in India, where much may be done in a

little while, than here, where nothing can be done save just enough to get salt to our broth, or broth to our salt? Methinks I have a natural turn for India, and so I ought. My father was a soldier, by the conjecture of all who saw him, and gave me a love of the sword, and an arm to use one. My mother's father was a rich trafficker, who loved wealth, I warrant me, and knew how to get it. This petty two hundred a-year, with its miserable and precarious possibilities, to be shared with the old gentleman, sounds in the ears of one like me, who have the world for the winning, and a sword to cut my way through it, like something little better than a decent kind of beggary. Menie is in herself a gem —a diamond—I admit it. But then one would not set such a precious jewel in lead or copper, but in pure gold—ay, and add a circlet of brilliants to set it off with. Be a good fellow, Adam, and undertake the setting my project in proper colors before the doctor. I am sure the wisest thing for him and Menie both is to permit me to spend this short time of probation in the land of cowries. I am sure my heart will be there at any rate, and while I am bleeding some bumpkin for an inflammation, I shall be in fancy relieving some nabob or rajahpoot of his plethora of wealth. Come, will you assist—will you be auxiliary? Ten chances but you plead your own cause, man, for I may be brought up by a saber or a bow-string before I make my pack up; then your road to Menie will be free and open, and, as you will be possessed of the situation of comforter *ex officio*, you may take her 'with the tear in her ee,' as old saws advise.'

"Mr. Richard Middlemas," said Hartley, "I wish it were possible for me to tell you, in the few words which I intend to bestow on you, whether I pity you or despise you the most. Heaven has placed happiness, competence, and content within your power, and you are willing to cast them away to gratify ambition and avarice. Were I to give any advice on this subject, either to Dr. Gray or his daughter, it would be to break off all connection with a man who, however clever by nature, may soon show himself a fool, and however honestly brought up, may also, upon temptation, prove himself a villain. You may lay aside the sneer which is designed to be a sarcastic smile. I will not attempt to do this, because I am convinced that my advice would be of no use, unless it could come unattended with suspicion of my motives. I will hasten my departure from this house, that we may not meet again; and I will leave it to God Almighty to protect honesty and innocence against the dangers which

must attend vanity and folly." So saying, he turned contemptuously from the youthful votary of ambition, and left the garden.

"Stop," said Middlemas, struck with the picture which had been held up to his conscience—"stop, Adam Hartley, and I will confess to you——" But his words were uttered in a faint and hesitating manner, and either never reached Hartley's ear or failed in changing his purpose of departure.

When he was out of the garden, Middlemas began to recall his usual boldness of disposition. "Had he stayed a moment longer," he said, "I would have turned Papist, and made him my ghostly confessor. The yeomanly churl! I would give something to know how he has got such a hank over me? What are Menie Gray's engagements to him? She has given him his answer, and what right has he to come betwixt her and me? If old Monçada had done a grandfather's duty, and made suitable settlements on me, this plan of marrying the sweet girl and settling here in her native place might have done well enough. But to live the life of the poor drudge her father—to be at the command and call of every boor for twenty miles round!—why, the labors of a higgler, who travels scores of miles to barter pins, ribbons, snuff, and tobacco against the housewife's private stock of eggs, mort-skins, and tallow, is more profitable, less laborious, and faith, I think, equally respectable. No—no, unless I can find wealth nearer home, I will seek it where every one can have it for the gathering; and so I will down to the Swan Inn and hold a final consultation with my friend."

CHAPTER V

THE friend whom Middlemas expected to meet at the Swan was a person already mentioned in this history by the name of Tom Hillary, bred an attorney's clerk in the ancient town of Novum Castrum, *doctus utriusque juris*, as far as a few months in the service of Mr. Lawford, town-clerk of Middlemas, could render him so. The last mention that we made of this gentleman was when his gold-laced hat veiled its splendor before the fresher-mounted beavers of the 'prentices of Dr. Gray. That was now about five years since, and it was within six months that he had made his appearance in Middlemas, a very different sort of personage from that which he seemed at his departure.

He was now called Captain ; his dress was regimental, and his language martial. He seemed to have plenty of cash, for he not only, to the great surprise of the parties, paid certain old debts which he had left unsettled behind him, and that notwithstanding his having, as his old practise told him, a good defense of prescription, but even sent the minister a guinea to the assistance of the parish poor. These acts of justice and benevolence were bruited abroad greatly to the honor of one who, so long absent, had neither forgotten his just debts nor hardened his heart against the cries of the needy. His merits were thought the higher when it was understood he had served the Honorable East India Company—that wonderful company of merchants, who may indeed, with the strictest propriety, be termed princes. It was about the middle of the 18th century, and the directors in Leadenhall Street were silently laying the foundation of that immense empire which afterwards rose like an exhalation, and now astonishes Europe, as well as Asia, with its formidable extent and stupendous strength. Britain had now begun to lend a wondering ear to the account of battles fought and cities won in the East ; and was surprised by the return of individuals who had left their native country as adventurers, but now reappeared there surrounded by Oriental wealth and Oriental luxury, which dimmed even the splendor of the most wealthy of the British nobility. In this new-found

El Dorado, Hillary had, it seems, been a laborer, and, if he told truth, to some purpose, though he was far from having completed the harvest which he meditated. He spoke, indeed, of making investments, and, as a mere matter of fancy, he consulted his old master, Clerk Lawford, concerning the purchase of a moorland farm of three thousand acres, for which he would be content to give three or four thousand guineas, providing the game was plenty and the trouting in the brook such as had been represented by advertisement. But he did not wish to make any extensive landed purchase at present. It was necessary to keep up his interest in Leadenhall Street; and in that view, it would be impolitic to part with his India stock and India bonds. In short, it was folly to think of settling on a poor thousand or twelve hundred a-year, when one was in the prime of life, and had no liver complaint; and so he was determined to double the Cape once again ere he retired to the chimney-corner for life. All he wished was, to pick up a few clever fellows for his regiment, or rather for his own company; and as in all his travels he had never seen finer fellows than about Middlemas, he was willing to give them the preference in completing his levy. In fact, it was making men of them at once, for a few white faces never failed to strike terror into these black rascals; and then, not to mention the good things that were going at the storming of a pettah or the plundering of a pagoda, most of these tawny dogs carried so much treasure about their persons that a won battle was equal to a mine of gold to the victors.

The natives of Middlemas listened to the noble captain's marvels whith different feelings, as their temperaments were saturnine or sanguine. But none could deny that such things had been; and as the narrator was known to be a bold, dashing fellow, possessed of some abilities, and, according to the general opinion, not likely to be withheld by any peculiar scruples of conscience, there was no giving any good reason why Hillary should not have been as successful as others in the field which India, agitated as it was by war and intestine disorders, seemed to offer to every enterprising adventurer. He was accordingly received by his old acquaintances at Middlemas rather with the respect due to his supposed wealth than in a manner corresponding with his former humble pretensions.

Some of the notables of the village did indeed keep aloof. Among these, the chief was Dr. Gray, who was an enemy to everything that approached to fanfaronade, and knew

enough of the world to lay it down as a sort of general rule that he who talks a great deal of fighting is seldom a brave soldier, and he who always speaks about wealth is seldom a rich man at bottom. Clerk Lawford was also shy, notwithstanding his communings with Hillary upon the subject of his intended purchase. The coolness of the captain's old employer towards him was by some supposed to arise out of certain circumstances attending their former connection; but as the clerk himself never explained what these were, it is unnecessary to make any conjectures upon the subject.

Richard Middlemas very naturally renewed his intimacy with his former comrade, and it was from Hillary's conversation that he had adopted the enthusiasm respecting India which we have heard him express. It was indeed, impossible for a youth at once inexperienced in the world and possessed of a most sanguine disposition to listen without sympathy to the glowing descriptions of Hillary, who, though only a recruiting captain, had all the eloquence of a recruiting sergeant. Palaces rose like mushrooms in his descriptions; groves of lofty trees and aromatic shrubs, unknown to the chilly soils of Europe, were tenanted by every object of the chase, from the royal tiger down to the jackal. The luxuries of a natch, and the peculiar Oriental beauty of the enchantresses who performed their voluptuous Eastern dances for the pleasure of the haughty English conquerors, were no less attractive than the battles and sieges on which the captain at other times expatiated. Not a stream did he mention but flowed over sands of gold, and not a palace that was inferior to those of the celebrated Fata Morgana. His descriptions seemed steeped in odors, and his every phrase perfumed in ottar of roses. The interviews at which these descriptions took place often ended in a bottle of choicer wine than the Swan Inn afforded, with some other appendages of the table, which the captain, who was a *bon-vivant*, had procured from Edinburgh. From this good cheer Middlemas was doomed to retire to the homely evening meal of his master, where not all the simple beauties of Menie were able to overcome his disgust at the coarseness of the provisions, or his unwillingness to answer questions concerning the diseases of the wretched peasants who were subjected to his inspection.

Richard's hopes of being acknowledged by his father had long since vanished, and the rough repulse and subsequent neglect on the part of Monçada had satisfied him that his grandfather was inexorable, and that neither then nor at any future time did he mean to realize the visions which Nurse

Jamieson's splendid figments had encouraged him to entertain. Ambition, however, was not lulled to sleep, though it was no longer nourished by the same hopes which had at first awakened it. The Indian captain's lavish oratory supplied the themes which had been at first derived from the legends of the nursery; the exploits of a Lawrence and a Clive, as well as the magnificent opportunities of acquiring wealth to which these exploits opened the road, disturbed the slumbers of the young adventurer. There was nothing to counteract these except his love for Menie Gray and the engagements into which it had led him. But his addresses had been paid to Menie as much for the gratification of his vanity as from any decided passion for that innocent and guileless being. He was desirous of carrying off the prize for which Hartley, whom he never loved, had the courage to contend with him. Then Menie Gray had been beheld with admiration by men his superiors in rank and fortune, but with whom his ambition incited him to dispute the prize. No doubt, though urged to play the gallant at first rather from vanity than any other cause, the frankness and modesty with which his suit was admitted made their natural impression on his heart. He was grateful to the beautiful creature who acknowledged the superiority of his person and accomplishments, and fancied himself as devotedly attached to her as her personal charms and mental merits would have rendered any one who was less vain or selfish than her lover. Still his passion for the surgeon's daughter ought not, he prudentially determined, to bear more than its due weight in a case so very important as the determining his line of life; and this he smoothed over to his conscience by repeating to himself that Menie's interest was as essentially concerned as his own in postponing their marriage to the establishment of his fortune. How many young couples had been ruined by a premature union!

The contemptuous conduct of Hartley in their last interview had done something to shake his comrade's confidence in the truth of this reasoning, and to lead him to suspect that he was playing a very sordid and unmanly part in trifling with the happiness of this amiable and unfortunate young woman. It was in this doubtful humor that he repaired to the Swan Inn, where he was anxiously expected by his friend the captain.

When they were comfortably seated over a bottle of Paxarete, Middlemas began, with characteristical caution, to sound his friend about the ease or difficulty with which an individ-

ual, desirous of entering the Company's service, might have an opportunity of getting a commission. If Hillary had answered truly, he would have replied that it was extremely easy; for, at that time, the East India service presented no charms to that superior class of people who have since struggled for admittance under its banners. But the worthy captain replied that, though in the general case it might be difficult for a young man to obtain a commission without serving for some years as a cadet, yet, under his own protection, a young man entering his regiment, and fitted for such a situation, might be sure of an ensigncy, if not a lieutenancy, as soon as ever they set foot in India. "If you, my dear fellow," continued he, extending his hand to Middlemas, "would think of changing sheep-head broth and haggis for mulligatawny and curry, I can only say that, though it is indispensable that you should enter the service at first simply as a cadet, yet, by ——, you should live like a brother on the passage with me; and no sooner were we through the surf at Madras than I would put you in the way of acquiring both wealth and glory. You have, I think, some trifle of money—a couple of thousands or so?"

"About a thousand or twelve hundred," said Richard, affecting the indifference of his companion, but feeling privately humbled by the scantiness of his resources.

"It is quite as much as you will find necessary for the outfit and passage," said his adviser; "and, indeed, if you had not a farthing, it would be the same thing; for if I once say to a friend, "I'll help you," Tom Hillary is not the man to start for fear of the cowries. However, it is as well you having something of a capital of your own to begin upon."

"Yes," replied the proselyte. "I should not like to be a burden on any one. I have some thoughts, to tell you the truth, to marry before I leave Britain; and in that case, you know, cash will be necessary, whether my wife goes out with us or remains behind till she hear how luck goes with me. So, after all, I may have to borrow a few hundreds of you."

"What the devil is that you say, Dick, about marrying and giving in marriage?" replied his friend. "What can put it into the head of a gallant young fellow like you, just rising twenty-one, and six feet high on your stocking-soles, to make a slave of yourself for life? No—no, Dick, that will never do. Remember the old song—

"Bachelor Bluff, bachelor Bluff,
Hey for a heart that's rugged and tough!"

"Ay—ay, that sounds very well," replied Middlemas; "but then one must shake off a number of old recollections."

"The sooner the better, Dick; old recollections are like old clothes, and should be sent off by wholesale: they only take up room in one's wardrobe, and it would be old-fashioned to wear them. But you look grave upon it. Who the devil is it has made such a hole in your heart?"

"Pshaw!" answered Middlemas, "I'm sure you must remember —Menie—my master's daughter."

"What, Miss Green, the old potter-carrier's daughter? A likely girl enough, I think."

"My master is a surgeon," said Richard, "not an apothecary, and his name is Gray."

"Ay—ay, Green or Gray—what does it signify? He sells his own drugs, I think, which we in the south call being a potter-carrier. The girl is a likely girl enough for a Scottish ball-room. But is she up to anything? Has she any *nouz?*"

"Why, she is a sensible girl, save in loving me," answered Richard; "and that, as Benedict says, is no proof of her wisdom and no great argument of her folly."

"But has she spirit—spunk—dash—a spice of the devil about her?"

"Not a pennyweight—the kindest, simplest, and most manageable of human beings," answered the lover.

"She won't do, then," said the monitor, in a decisive tone. "I am sorry for it, Dick, but she will never do. There are some women in the world that can bear their share in the bustling life we live in India—ay, and I have known some of them drag forward husbands that would otherwise have stuck fast in the mud till the day of judgment. Heaven knows how they paid the turnpikes they pushed them through! But these were none of your simple Susans, that think their eyes are good for nothing but to look at their husbands, or their fingers but to sew baby-clothes. Depend on it, you must give up your matrimony or your views of preferment. If you wilfully tie a clog round your throat, never think of running a race. But do not suppose that your breaking off with the lass will make any very terrible catastrophe. A scene there may be at parting; but you will soon forget her among the native girls, and she will fall in love with Mr. Tapeitout, the minister's assistant and successor. She is not goods for the Indian market, I assure you."

Among the capricious weaknesses of humanity, that one is particularly remarkable which inclines us to esteem per-

sons and things not by their real value, or even by our own judgment, so much as by the opinion of others, who are often very incompetent judges. Dick Middlemas had been urged forward in his suit to Menie Gray by his observing how much her partner, a booby laird, had been captivated by her; and she was now lowered in his esteem because an impudent, low-lived coxcomb had presumed to talk of her with disparagement. Either of these worthy gentlemen would have been as capable of enjoying the beauties of Homer as of judging of the merits of Menie Gray.

Indeed, the ascendency which this bold-talking, promise-making soldier had acquired over Dick Middlemas, wilful as he was in general, was of a despotic nature; because the captain, though greatly inferior in information and talent to the youth whose opinions he swayed, had skill in suggesting those tempting views of rank and wealth to which Richard's imagination had been from childhood most accessible. One promise he exacted from Middlemas, as a condition of the services which he was to render him: it was absolute silence on the subject of his destination for India, and the views upon which it took place. "My recruits," said the captain, "have been all marched off for the depôt at the Isle of Wight; and I want to leave Scotland, and particularly this little burgh, without being worried to death, of which I must despair, should it come to be known that I can provide young griffins, as we call them, with commissions. Gad, I should carry off all the first-born of Middlemas as cadets, and none are so scrupulous as I am about making promises. I am as trusty as a Trojan for that; and you know I cannot do that for every one which I would for an old friend like Dick Middlemas."

Dick promised secrecy, and it was agreed that the two friends should not even leave the burgh in company, but that the captain should set off first, and his recruit should join him at Edinburgh, where his enlistment might be attested; and then they were to travel together to town, and arrange matters for their Indian voyage.

Notwithstanding the definite arrangement which was thus made for his departure, Middlemas thought from time to time with anxiety and regret about quitting Menie Gray, after the engagement which had passed between them. The resolution was taken, however; the blow was necessarily to be struck; and her ungrateful lover, long since determined against the life of domestic happiness which he might have enjoyed had his views been better regulated,

was now occupied with the means, not indeed of breaking off with her entirely, but of postponing all thoughts of their union until the success of his expedition to India.

He might have spared himself all anxiety on this last subject. The wealth of that India to which he was bound would not have bribed Menie Gray to have left her father's roof against her father's commands; still less when, deprived of his two assistants, he must be reduced to the necessity of continued exertion in his declining life, and therefore might have accounted himself altogether deserted had his daughter departed from him at the same time. But though it would have been her unalterable determination not to accept any proposal of an immediate union of their fortunes, Menie could not, with all a lover's power of self-deception, succeed in persuading herself to be satisfied with Richard's conduct towards her. Modesty and a becoming pride prevented her from seeming to notice, but could not prevent her from bitterly feeling, that her lover was preferring the pursuits of ambition to the humble lot which he might have shared with her, and which promised content at least, if not wealth.

"If he had loved me as he pretended," such was the unwilling conviction that rose on her mind, "my father would surely not have ultimately refused him the same terms which he held out to Hartley. His objections would have given way to my happiness, nay, to Richard's importunities, which would have removed his suspicions of the unsettled cast of his disposition. But I fear—I fear Richard hardly thought the terms proposed were worthy of his acceptance. Would it not have been natural, too, that he should have asked me, engaged as we stand to each other, to have united our fate before his quitting Europe, when I might either have remained here with my father, or accompanied him to India, in quest of that fortune which he is so eagerly pushing for? It would have been wrong—very wrong—in me to have consented to such a proposal, unless my father had authorized it; but surely it would have been natural that Richard should have offered it? Alas! men do not know how to love like women. Their attachment is only one of a thousand other passions and predilections: they are daily engaged in pleasures which blunt their feelings, and in business which distracts them. We—we sit at home to weep, and to think how coldly our affections are repaid!"

The time was now arrived at which Richard Middlemas had a right to demand the property vested in the hands of

the town-clerk and Doctor Gray. He did so, and received it accordingly. His late guardian naturally inquired what views he had formed in entering on life? The imagination of the ambitious aspirant saw in this simple question a desire, on the part of the worthy man, to offer, and perhaps press upon him, the same proposal which he had made to Hartley. He hastened, therefore, to answer dryly, that he had some hopes held out to him which he was not at liberty to communicate; but that the instant he reached London he would write to the guardian of his youth and acquaint him with the nature of his prospects, which he was happy to say were rather of a pleasing character.

Gideon, who supposed that at this critical period of his life the father or grandfather of the young man might perhaps have intimated a disposition to open some intercourse with him, only replied, "You have been the child of mystery, Richard; and as you came to me, so you leave me. Then I was ignorant from whence you came, and now I know not whither you are going. It is not, perhaps, a very favorable point in your horoscope that everything connected with you is a secret. But as I shall always think with kindness on him whom I have known so long, so when you remember the old man, you ought not to forget that he has done his duty to you to the extent of his means and power, and taught you that noble profession by means of which, wherever your lot casts you, you may always gain your bread, and alleviate, at the same time, the distresses of your fellow-creatures." Middlemas was excited by the simple kindness of his master, and poured forth his thanks with the greater profusion, that he was free from the terror of the emblematical collar and chain, which a moment before seemed to glisten in the hand of his guardian, and gape to inclose his neck.

"One word more," said Mr. Gray, producing a small ring-case. "This valuable ring was forced upon me by your unfortunate mother. I have no right to it, having been amply paid for my services; and I only accepted it with the purpose of keeping it for you till this moment should arrive. It may be useful, perhaps, should there occur any question about your identity."

"Thanks, once more, my more than father, for this precious relic, which may indeed be useful. You shall be repaid, if India has diamonds left."

"India and diamonds!" said Gray. "Is your head turned, child?"

"I mean," stammered Middlemas, "if London has any Indian diamonds."

"Pooh! you foolish lad," answered Gray, "how should you buy diamonds, or what should I do with them, if you gave me ever so many? Get you gone with you while I am angry." The tears were glistening in the old man's eyes. "If I get pleased with you again, I shall not know how to part with you."

The parting of Middlemas with poor Menie was yet more affecting. Her sorrow revived in his mind all the liveliness of a first love, and he redeemed his character for sincere attachment by not only imploring an instant union, but even going so far as to propose renouncing his more splendid prospects, and sharing Mr. Gray's humble toil, if by doing so he could secure his daughter's hand. But, though there was consolation in this testimony of her lover's faith, Menie Gray was not so unwise as to accept of sacrifices which might afterwards have been repented of.

"No, Richard," she said, "it seldom ends happily when people alter, in a moment of agitated feeling, plans which have been adopted under mature deliberation. I have long seen that your views were extended far beyond so humble a station as this place affords promise of. It is natural they should do so, considering that the circumstances of your birth seem connected with riches and with rank. Go, then, seek that riches and rank. It is possible your mind may be changed in the pursuit, and if so, think no more about Menie Gray. But if it should be otherwise, we may meet again, and do not believe for a moment that there can be a change in Menie Gray's feelings towards you."

At this interview much more was said than it is necessary to repeat, much more thought than was actually said. Nurse Jamieson, in whose chamber it took place, folded her "bairns," as she called them, in her arms, and declared that Heaven had made them for each other, and that she would not ask of Heaven to live beyond the day when she should see them bridegroom and bride.

At length it became necessary that the parting scene should end; and Richard Middlemas, mounting a horse which he had hired for the journey, set off for Edinburgh, to which metropolis he had already forwarded his heavy baggage. Upon the road the idea more than once occurred to him that even yet he had better return to Middlemas, and secure his happiness by uniting himself at once to Menie Gray and to humble competence. But from the moment that he rejoined

his friend Hillary at their appointed place of rendezvous he became ashamed even to hint at any change of purpose ; and his late excited feelings were forgotten, unless in so far as they confirmed his resolution that, as soon as he had attained a certain portion of wealth and consequence, he would haste to share them with Menie Gray. Yet his gratitude to her father did not appear to have slumbered, if we may judge from the gift of a very handsome cornelian seal, set in gold, and bearing engraved upon it gules, a lion rampant within a bordure or, which was carefully despatched to Stevenlaw's Land, Middlemas, with a suitable letter. Menie knew the handwriting, and watched her father's looks as he read it, thinking, perhaps, that it had turned on a different topic. Her father pshawed and poohed a good deal when he had finished the billet, and examined the seal.

"Dick Middlemas," he said, "is but a fool after all, Menie. I am sure I am not like to forget him, that he should send me a token of remembrance ; and if he would be so absurd, could he not have sent me the improved lithotomical apparatus ? And what have I, Gideon Gray, to do with the arms of my Lord Gray ? No—no, my old silver stamp, with the double G upon it, will serve my turn. But put the bonny die away, Menie, my dear ; it was kindly meant, at any rate."

The reader cannot doubt that the seal was safely and carefully preserved.

CHAPTER VI

> A lazar-house it seemed, wherein were laid
> Numbers of all diseased.
>
> MILTON.

AFTER the captain had finished his business, amongst which he did not forget to have his recruit regularly attested as a candidate for glory in the service of the Honorable East India Company, the friends left Edinburgh. From thence they got a passage by sea to Newcastle, where Hillary had also some regimental affairs to transact before he joined his regiment. At Newcastle the captain had the good luck to find a small brig, commanded by an old acquaintance and schoolfellow, which was just about to sail for the Isle of Wight. "I have arranged for our passage with him," he said to Middlemas; "for when you are at the depôt you can learn a little of your duty, which cannot be so well taught on board of ship, and then I will find it easier to have you promoted."

"Do you mean," said Richard, "that I am to stay at the Isle of Wight all the time that you are jigging it away in London?"

"Ay, indeed do I," said his comrade, "and it's best for you too; whatever business you have in London, I can do it for you as well or something better than yourself."

"But I choose to transact my own business myself, Captain Hillary," said Richard.

"Then you ought to have remained your own master, Mr. Cadet Middlemas. At present you are an enlisted recruit of the Honorable East India Company; I am your officer, and should you hesitate to follow me aboard, why, you foolish fellow, I could have you sent on board in handcuffs."

This was jestingly spoken; but yet there was something in the tone which hurt Middlemas's pride and alarmed his fears. He had observed of late that his friend, especially when in company of others, talked to him with an air of command or superiority, difficult to be endured, and yet so closely allied to the freedom often exercised betwixt two intimates, that he could not find any proper mode of rebuffing or resenting it. Such manifestations of authority were

usually followed by an instant renewal of their intimacy; but in the present case that did not so speedily ensue.

Middlemas, indeed, consented to go with his companion to the Isle of Wight, perhaps because if he should quarrel with him the whole plan of his Indian voyage, and all the hopes built upon it, must fall to the ground. But he altered his purpose of entrusting his comrade with his little fortune, to lay out as his occasions might require, and resolved himself to overlook the expenditure of his money, which, in the form of Bank of England notes, was safely deposited in his traveling-trunk. Captain Hillary, finding that some hint he had thrown out on this subject was disregarded, appeared to think no more about it.

The voyage was performed with safety and celerity; and having coasted the shores of that beautiful island, which he who once sees never forgets, through whatever part of the world his future path may lead him, the vessel was soon anchored off the little town of Ryde; and, as the waves were uncommonly still, Richard felt the sickness diminish which, for a considerable part of the passage, had occupied his attention more than anything else.

The master of the brig, in honor to his passengers and affection to his old schoolfellow, had formed an awning upon deck, and proposed to have the pleasure of giving them a little treat before they left his vessel. Lobscouse, sea-pie, and other delicacies of a naval description had been provided in a quantity far disproportionate to the number of the guests. But the punch which succeeded was of excellent quality, and portentously strong. Captain Hillary pushed it round, and insisted upon his companion taking his full share in the merry bout, the rather that, as he facetiously said, there had been some dryness between them, which good liquor would be sovereign in removing. He renewed, with additional splendors, the various panoramic scenes of India and Indian adventures which had first excited the ambition of Middlemas, and assured him that, even if he should not be able to get him a commission instantly, yet a short delay would only give him time to become better acquainted with his military duties; and Middlemas was too much elevated by the liquor he had drank to see any difficulty which could oppose itself to his fortunes. Whether those who shared in the compotation were more seasoned topers, whether Middlemas drank more than they, or whether, as he himself afterwards suspected, his cup had been drugged, like those of King Duncan's body-guard, it

is certain that on this occasion he passed, with unusual rapidity, through all the different phases of the respectable state of drunkenness—laughed, sung, whooped, and hallooed, was maudlin in his fondness and frantic in his wrath, and at length fell into a fast and imperturbable sleep.

The effect of the liquor displayed itself, as usual, in a hundred wild dreams of parched deserts, and of serpents whose bite inflicted the most intolerable thirst, of the suffering of the Indian on the death-stake, and the torments of the infernal regions themselves, when at length he awakened, and it appeared that the latter vision was in fact realized. The sounds which had at first influenced his dreams, and at length broken his slumbers, were of the most horrible as well as the most melancholy description. They came from the ranges of pallet-beds which were closely packed together in a species of military hospital, where a burning fever was the prevalent complaint. Many of the patients were under the influence of a high delirium, during which they shouted, shrieked, laughed, blasphemed, and uttered the most horrible imprecations. Others, sensible of their condition, bewailed it with low groans and some attempts at devotion, which showed their ignorance of the principles, and even the forms, of religion. Those who were convalescent talked ribaldry in a loud tone, or whispered to each other in cant language, upon schemes which, as far as a passing phrase could be understood by a novice, had relation to violent and criminal exploits.

Richard Middlemas's astonishment was equal to his horror. He had but one advantage over the poor wretches with whom he was classed, and it was in enjoying the luxury of a pallet to himself, most of the others being occupied by two unhappy beings. He saw no one who appeared to attend to the wants, or to heed the complaints, of the wretches around him, or to whom he could offer any appeal against his present situation. He looked for his clothes, that he might arise and extricate himself from this den of horrors; but his clothes were nowhere to be seen, nor did he see his portmanteau or sea-chest. It was much to be apprehended he would never see them more.

Then, but too late, he remembered the insinuations which had passed current respecting his friend the captain, who was supposed to have been discharged by Mr. Lawford on account of some breach of trust in the town-clerk's service. But that he should have trepanned the friend who had reposed his whole confidence in him, that he should have

plundered him of his fortune, and placed him in this house of pestilence, with the hope that death might stifle his tongue, were iniquities not to have been anticipated, even if the worst of these reports were true.

But Middlemas resolved not to be awanting to himself. This place must be visited by some officer, military or medical, to whom he would make an appeal, and alarm his fears at least, if he could not awaken his conscience. While he revolved these distracting thoughts, tormented at the same time by a burning thirst which he had no means of satisfying, he endeavored to discover if, among those stretched upon the pallets nearest him, he could not discern some one likely to enter into conversation with him, and give him some information about the nature and customs of this horrid place. But the bed nearest him was occupied by two fellows who, although, to judge from their gaunt cheeks, hollow eyes, and ghastly looks, they were apparently recovering from the disease, and just rescued from the jaws of death, were deeply engaged in endeavoring to cheat each other of a few halfpence at a game of cribbage, mixing the terms of the game with oaths not loud but deep ; each turn of luck being hailed by the winner as well as the loser with execrations, which seemed designed to blight both body and soul, now used as the language of triumph, and now as reproaches against fortune.

Next to the gamblers was a pallet occupied indeed by two bodies, but only one of which was living : the other sufferer had been recently relieved from his agony.

"He is dead—he is dead !" said the wretched survivor.

"Then do you die too, and be d—d," answered one of the players, "and then there will be a pair of you, as Pugg says."

"I tell you he is growing stiff and cold," said the poor wretch : "the dead is no bedfellow for the living. For God's sake, help to rid me of the corpse."

"Ay, and get the credit of having *done* him—as may be the case with yourself, friend, for he had some two or three hoggs about him——"

"You know you took the last rap from his breeches-pocket not an hour ago," expostulated the poor convalescent. "But help me to take the body out of the bed, and I will not tell the jigger-dubber that you have been beforehand with him."

"You tell the jigger-dubber !" answered the cribbage-player. "Such another word, and I will twist your head

round till your eyes look at the drummer's handwriting on your back. Hold your peace, and don't bother our game with your gammon, or I will make you as mute as your bed-fellow."

The unhappy wretch, exhausted, sunk back beside his hideous companion, and the usual jargon of the game, interlarded with execrations, went on as before.

From this specimen of the most obdurate indifference, contrasted with the last excess of misery, Middlemas became satisfied how little could be made of an appeal to the humanity of his fellow-sufferers. His heart sunk within him, and the thoughts of the happy and peaceful home which he might have called his own arose before his overheated fancy with a vividness of perception that bordered upon insanity. He saw before him the rivulet which wanders through the burgh muir of Middlemas, where he had so often set little mills for the amusement of Menie while she was a child. One draught of it would have been worth all the diamonds of the East, which of late he had worshiped with such devotion; but that draught was denied to him as to Tantalus.

Rallying his senses from this passing illusion, and knowing enough of the practise of the medical art to be aware of the necessity of preventing his ideas from wandering, if possible, he endeavored to recollect that he was a surgeon, and, after all, should not have the extreme fear for the interior of a military hospital which its horrors might inspire into strangers to the profession. But, though he strove by such recollections to rally his spirits, he was not the less aware of the difference betwixt the condition of a surgeon who might have attended such a place in the course of his duty and a poor inhabitant who was at once a patient and a prisoner.

A footstep was now heard in the apartment, which seemed to silence all the varied sounds of woe that filled it. The cribbage-party hid their cards and ceased their oaths; other wretches, whose complaints had arisen to frenzy, left off their wild exclamations and entreaties for assistance. Agony softened her shriek, Insanity hushed its senseless clamors, and even Death seemed desirous to stifle his parting groan in the presence of Captain Seelencooper. This official was the superintendent, or, as the miserable inhabitants termed him, the governor, of the hospital. He had all the air of having been originally a turnkey in some ill-regulated jail—a stout, short, bandy-legged man, with one eye, and a double portion of ferocity in that which remained. He

wore an old-fashioned tarnished uniform, which did not seem to have been made for him; and the voice in which this minister of humanity addressed the sick was that of a boatswain shouting in the midst of a storm. He had pistols and a cutlass in his belt; for, his mode of administration being such as provoked even hospital patients to revolt, his life had been more than once in danger amongst them. He was followed by two assistants, who carried handcuffs and strait-jackets.

As Seelencooper made his rounds, complaint and pain were hushed, and the flourish of the bamboo which he bore in his hand seemed powerful as the wand of a magician to silence all complaint and remonstrance.

"I tell you the meat is as sweet as a nosegay; and for the bread, it's good enough, and too good, for a set of lubbers that lie shamming Abraham, and consuming the Right Honorable Company's victuals. I don't speak to them that are really sick, for God knows I am always for humanity."

"If that be the case, sir," said Richard Middlemas, whose lair the captain had approached, while he was thus answering the low and humble complaints of those by whose bedside he passed—"if that be the case, sir, I hope your humanity will make you attend to what I say."

"And who the devil are you?" said the governor, turning on him his single eye of fire, while a sneer gathered on his harsh features, which were so well qualified to express it.

"My name is Middlemas; I come from Scotland, and have been sent here by some strange mistake. I am neither a private soldier nor am I indisposed, more than by the heat of this cursed place."

"Why then, friend, all I have to ask you is, whether you are an attested recruit or not?"

"I was attested at Edinburgh," said Middlemas, "but——"

"But what the devil would you have, then? You are enlisted. The captain and the doctor sent you here; surely they know best whether you are private or officer, sick or well."

"But I was promised," said Middlemas—"promised by Tom Hilary——"

"Promised, were you? Why, there is not a man here that has not been promised something by somebody or another, or perhaps has promised something to himself. This is the land of promise, my smart fellow, but you know it is India that must be the land of performance. So good

morning to you. The doctor will come his rounds presently, and put you all to rights."

"Stay but one moment—one moment only: I have been robbed."

"Robbed! look you there now," said the governor, "everybody that comes here has been robbed. Egad, I am the luckiest fellow in Europe: other people in my line have only thieves and blackguards upon their hands; but none come to my ken but honest, decent, unfortunate gentlemen that have been robbed!"

"Take care how you treat this so lightly, sir," said Middlemas; "I have been robbed of a thousand pounds."

Here Governor Seelencooper's gravity was totally overcome, and his laugh was echoed by several of the patients, either because they wished to curry favor with the superintendent or from the feeling which influences evil spirits to rejoice in the tortures of those who are sent to share their agony.

"A thousand pounds!" exclaimed Captain Seelencooper, as he recovered his breath. "Come, that's a good one—I like a fellow that does not make two bites of a cherry; why, there is not a cull in the ken that pretends to have lost more than a few hoggs, and here is a servant to the Honorable Company that has been robbed of a thousand pounds! Well done, Mr. Tom of Ten Thousand, you're a credit to the house, and to the service, and so good morning to you."

He passed on, and Richard, starting up in a storm of anger and despair, found, as he would have called after him, that his voice, betwixt thirst and agitation, refused its office. "Water—water!" he said, laying hold, at the same time, of one of the assistants who followed Seenlencooper by the sleeve. The fellow looked carelessly round; there was a jug stood by the side of the cribbage-players, which he reached to Middlemas, bidding him, "Drink and be d—d."

The man's back was no sooner turned than the gamester threw himself from his own bed into that of Middlemas, and grasping firm hold of the arm of Richard, ere he could carry the vessel to his head, swore be should not have his booze. It may be readily conjectured that the pitcher thus anxiously and desperately reclaimed contained something better than the pure element. In fact, a large proportion of it was gin. The jug was broken in the struggle and the liquor spilt. Middlemas dealt a blow to the assailant, which was amply and heartily repaid, and a combat would have ensued, but for the interference of the superintendent and his assistants,

who, with a dexterity that showed them well acquainted with such emergencies, clapped a strait-waistcoat upon each of the antagonists. Richard's efforts at remonstrance only procured him a blow from Captain Seelencooper's rattan, and a tender admonition to hold his tongue if he valued a whole skin.

Irritated at once by sufferings of the mind and of the body, tormented by raging thirst, and by the sense of his own dreadful situation, the mind of Richard Middlemas seemed to be on the point of becoming unsettled. He felt an insane desire to imitate and reply to the groans, oaths, and ribaldry which, as soon as the superintendent quitted the hospital, echoed around him. He longed, though he struggled against the impulse, to vie in curses with the reprobate, and in screams with the maniac. But his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth, his mouth itself seemed choked with ashes; there came upon him a dimness of sight, a rushing sound in his ears, and the powers of life were for a time suspended.

CHAPTER VII

> A wise physician, skill'd our wounds to heal,
> Is more than armies to the common weal.
>
> POPE'S *Homer.*

As Middlemas returned to his senses, he was sensible that his blood felt more cool, that the feverish throb of his pulsation was diminished, that the ligatures on his person were removed, and his lungs performed their functions more freely. One assistant was binding up a vein, from which a considerable quantity of blood had been taken; another, who had just washed the face of the patient, was holding aromatic vinegar to his nostrils. As he began to open his eyes, the person who had just completed the bandage said in Latin, but in a very low tone, and without raising his head, "Annon sis Ricardus ille Middlemas, ex civitate Middlemassiense? Responde in lingua Latina."

"Sum ille miserrimus," replied Richard, again shutting his eyes; for, strange as it may seem, the voice of his comrade Adam Hartley, though his presence might be of so much consequence in this emergency, conveyed a pang to his wounded pride. He was conscious of unkindly, if not hostile, feelings towards his old companion; he remembered the tone of superiority which he used to assume over him, and thus to lie stretched at his feet, and in a manner at his mercy, aggravated his distress, by the feelings of the dying chieftain, "Earl Percy sees my fall." This was, however, too unreasonable an emotion to subsist above a minute. In the next, he availed himself of the Latin language, with which both were familiar, for in that time the medical studies at the celebrated University of Edinburgh were, in a great measure, conducted in Latin, to tell in a few words his own folly, and the villainy of Hillary.

"I must be gone instantly," said Hartley. "Take courage; I trust to be able to assist you. In the meantime, take food and physic from none but my servant, who you see holds the sponge in his hand. You are in a place where a man's life has been taken for the sake of his gold sleeve-buttons."

"Stay yet a moment," said Middlemas. "Let me remove this temptation from my dangerous neighbors."

He drew a small packet from his under waistcoat, and put it into Hartley's hands.

"If I die," he said, "be my heir. You deserve her better than I."

All answer was prevented by the hoarse voice of Seelencooper.

"Well, doctor, will you carry through your patient?"

"Symptoms are dubious yet," said the doctor. "That was an alarming swoon. You must have him carried into the private ward, and my young man shall attend him."

"Why, if you command it, doctor, needs must; but I can tell you there is a man we both know that has a thousand reasons at least for keeping him in the public ward."

"I know nothing of your thousand reasons," said Hartley; "I can only tell you that this young fellow is as well-limbed and likely a lad as the Company have among their recruits. It is my business to save him for their service, and if he dies by your neglecting what I direct, depend upon it I will not allow the blame to lie at my door. I will tell the General the charge I have given you."

"The General!" said Seelencooper, much embarrassed. "Tell the General? Ay, about his health. But you will not say anything about what he may have said in his light-headed fits? My eyes! if you listen to what feverish patients say when the tantivy is in their brain, your back will soon break with tale-bearing, for I will warrant you plenty of them to carry."

"Captain Seelencooper," said the doctor, "I do not meddle with your department in the hospital. My advice to you is, not to trouble yourself with mine. I suppose, as I have a commission in the service, and have besides a regular diploma as a physician, I know when my patient is light-headed or otherwise. So do you let the man be carefully looked after, at your peril."

Thus saying, he left the hospital, but not till, under pretext of again consulting the pulse, he pressed the patient's hand, as if to assure him once more of his exertions for his liberation.

"My eyes!" muttered Seelencooper, "this cockerel crows gallant, to come from a Scotch roost; but I would know well enough how to fetch the youngster off the perch, if it were not for the cure he has done on the General's pickaninnies."

Enough of this fell on Richard's ear to suggest hopes of deliverance, which were increased when he was shortly afterwards removed to a separate ward, a place much more decent in appearance, and inhabited only by two patients, who seemed petty officers. Although sensible that he had no illness save that weakness which succeeds violent agitation, he deemed it wisest to suffer himself still to be treated as a patient, in consideration that he should thus remain under his comrade's superintendence. Yet, while preparing to avail himself of Hartley's good offices, the prevailing reflection of his secret bosom was the ungrateful sentiment, "Had Heaven no other means of saving me than by the hands of him I like least on the face of the earth?"

Meanwhile, ignorant of the ungrateful sentiments of his comrade, and indeed wholly indifferent how he felt towards him, Hartley proceeded in doing him such service as was in his power, without any other object than the discharge of his own duty as a man and as a Christian. The manner in which he became qualified to render his comrade assistance requires some short explanation.

Our story took place at a period when the Directors of the East India Company, with that hardy and persevering policy which has raised to such a height the British Empire in the East, had determined to send a large reinforcement of European troops to the support of their power in India, then threatened by the kingdom of Mysore, of which the celebrated Hyder Ali had usurped the government, after dethroning his master. Considerable difficulty was found in obtaining recruits for that service. Those who might have been otherwise disposed to be soldiers were afraid of the climate, and of the species of banishment which the engagement implied; and doubted also how far the engagements of the Company might be faithfully observed towards them, when they were removed from the protection of the British laws. For these and other reasons, the military service of the king was preferred, and that of the Company could only procure the worst recuits, although their zealous agents scrupled not to employ the worst means. Indeed, the practise of kidnapping, or crimping, as it is technically called, was at that time general, whether for the colonies or even for the king's troops; and as the agents employed in such transactions must be of course entirely unscrupulous, there was not only much villainy committed in the direct prosecution of the trade, but it gave rise incidentally to remarkable cases of robbery, and even murder. Such atrocities

were, of course, concealed from the authorities for whom the levies were made, and the necessity of obtaining soldiers made men whose conduct was otherwise unexceptionable cold in looking closely into the mode in which their recruiting service was conducted.

The principal depôt of the troops which were by these means assembled was in the Isle of Wight, where, the season proving unhealthy, and the men themselves being many of them of a bad habit of body, a fever of a malignant character broke out amongst them, and speedily crowded with patients the military hospital, of which Mr. Seelencooper, himself an old and experienced crimp and kidnapper, had obtained the superintendence. Irregularities began to take place also among the soldiers who remained healthy, and the necessity of subjecting them to some discipline before they sailed was so evident, that several officers of the Company's naval service expressed their belief that otherwise there would be dangerous mutinies on the passage.

To remedy the first of these evils, the Court of Directors sent down to the island several of their medical servants, amongst whom was Hartley, whose qualifications had been amply certified by a medical board, before which he had passed an examination, besides his possessing a diploma from the University of Edinburgh as M. D.

To enforce the discipline of their soldiers, the Court committed full power to one of their own body, General Witherington. The General was an officer who had distinguished himself highly in their service. He had returned from India five or six years before, with a large fortune, which he had rendered much greater by an advantageous marriage with a rich heiress. The General and his lady went little into society, but seemed to live entirely for their infant family, those in number being three, two boys and a girl. Although he had retired from the service, he willingly undertook the temporary charge committed to him, and taking a house at a considerable distance from the town of Ryde, he proceeded to enrol the troops into separate bodies, appoint officers of capacity to each, and, by regular training and discipline, gradually to bring them into something resembling good order. He heard their complaints of ill-usage in the articles of provisions and appointments, and did them upon all occasions the strictest justice, save that he was never known to restore one recuit to his freedom from the service, however unfairly or even illegally his attestation might have been obtained.

"It is none of my business," said General Witherington, "how you became soldiers—soldiers I found you, and soldiers I will leave you. But I will take especial care that, as soldiers you shall have everything, to a penny or a pin's head, that you are justly entitled to." He went to work without fear or favor, reported many abuses to the Board of Directors, had several officers, commissaries, etc., removed from the service, and made his name as great a terror to the peculators at home as it had been to the enemies of Britain in Hindostan.

Captain Seelencooper and his associates in the hospital department heard and trembled, fearing that their turn should come next; but the General, who elsewhere examined all with his own eyes, showed a reluctance to visit the hospital in person. Public report industriously imputed this to fear of infection. Such was certainly the motive; though it was not fear for his own safety that influenced General Witherington, but he dreaded lest he should carry the infection home to the nursery, on which he doated. The alarm of his lady was yet more unreasonably sensitive: she would scarcely suffer the children to walk abroad, if the wind but blew, from the quarter where the hospital was situated.

But Providence baffles the precautions of mortals. In a walk across the fields, chosen as the most sheltered and sequestered, the children, with their train of Eastern and European attendants, met a woman who carried a child that was recovering from the small-pox. The anxiety of the father, joined to some religious scruples on the mother's part, had postponed inoculation, which was then scarcely come into general use. The infection caught like a quick-match, and ran like wildfire through all those in the family who had not previously had the disease. One of the General's children, the second boy, died, and two of the ayahs, or black female servants, had the same fate. The hearts of the father and mother would have been broken for the child they had lost, had not their grief been suspended by anxiety for the fate of those who lived, and who were confessed to be in imminent danger. They were like persons distracted, as the symptoms of the poor patients seemed gradually to resemble more nearly that of the child already lost.

While the parents were in this agony of apprehension, the General's principal servant, a native of Northumberland like himself, informed him one morning that there was a young man from the same county among the hospital

doctors who had publicly blamed the mode of treatment observed towards the patients, and spoken of another which he had seen practised with eminent success.

"Some impudent quack," said the General, "who would force himself into business by bold assertions. Doctor Tourniquet and Doctor Lancelot are men of high reputation."

"Do not mention their reputation," said the mother, with a mother's impatience; "did they not let my sweet Reuben die? What avails the reputation of the physician when the patient perisheth?"

"If his honor would but see Doctor Hartley," said Winter, turning half towards the lady, and then turning back again to his master. "He is a very decent young man, who, I am sure, never expected what he said to reach your honor's ears—and he is a native of Northumberland."

"Send a servant with a led horse," said the General; "let the young man come hither instantly."

It is well known that the ancient mode of treating the small-pox was to refuse to the patient everything which nature urged him to desire; and, in particular, to confine him to heated rooms, beds loaded with blankets, and spiced wine, when nature called for cold water and fresh air. A different mode of treatment had of late been adventured upon by some practitioners, who preferred reason to authority and Gideon Gray had followed it for several years with extraordinary success.

When General Witherington saw Hartley, he was startled at his youth; but when he heard him modestly, but with confidence, state the difference of the two modes of treatment, and the *rationale* of his practise, he listened with the most serious attention. So did his lady, her streaming eyes turning from Hartley to her husband, as if to watch what impression the arguments of the former were making upon the latter. General Witherington was silent for a few minutes after Hartley had finished his exposition, and seemed buried in profound reflection. "To treat a fever," he said, "in a manner which tends to produce one seems indeed to be adding fuel to fire."

"It is—it is," said the lady. "Let us trust this young man, General Witherington. We shall at least give our darlings the comforts of the fresh air and cold water for which they are pining."

But the General remained undecided. "Your reasoning," he said to Hartley, "seems plausible; but still it is

only hypothesis. What can you show to support your theory in opposition to the general practise ?"

"My own observation," replied the young man. "Here is a memorandum-book of medical cases which I have witnessed. It contains twenty cases of small-pox, of which eighteen were recoveries."

"And the two others ?" said the General.

"Terminated fatally," replied Hartley ; "we can as yet but partially disarm this scourge of the human race."

"Young man," continued the General "were I to say that a thousand gold mohurs were yours in case my children live under your treatment, what have you to peril in exchange ?"

"My reputation," answered Hartley, firmly.

"And you could warrant on your reputation the recovery of your patients ?"

"God forbid I should be so presumptuous ! But I think I could warrant my using those means which, with God's blessing, afford the fairest chance of a favorable result."

"Enough—you are modest and sensible, as well as bold, and I will trust you."

The lady, on whom Hartley's words and manner had made a great impression, and who was eager to discontinue a mode of treatment which subjected the patients to the greatest pain and privation, and had already proved unfortunate, eagerly acquiesced, and Hartley was placed in full authority in the sick-room.

Windows were thrown open, fires reduced or discontinued, loads of bed-clothes removed, cooling drinks superseded mulled wine and spices. The sick-nurses cried out murder. Doctors Tourniquet and Lancelot retired in disgust, menacing something like a general pestilence, in vengeance of what they termed rebellion against the neglect of the aphorisms of Hippocrates. Hartley proceeded quietly and steadily, and the patients got into a fair road of recovery.

The young Northumbrian was neither conceited nor artful ; yet, with all his plainness of character, he could not but know the influence which a successful physician obtains over the parents of the children whom he has saved from the grave, and especially before the cure is actually completed. He resolved to use this influence in behalf of his old companion, trusting that the military tenacity of General Witherington would give way on consideration of the obligation so lately conferred upon him.

On his way to the General's house, which was at present his constant place of residence, he examined the packet which

Middlemas had put into his hand. It contained the picture of Menie Gray, plainly set, and the ring, with brilliants, which Doctor Gray had given to Richard as his mother's last gift. The first of these tokens extracted from honest Hartley a sigh, perhaps a tear, of sad remembrance. "I fear," he said, "she has not chosen worthily; but she shall be happy, if I can make her so."

Arrived at the residence of General Witherington, our doctor went first to the sick apartment, and then carried to their parents the delightful account that the recovery of the children might be considered as certain. "May the God of Israel bless thee, young man!" said the lady, trembling with emotion; "thou hast wiped the tear from the eye of the despairing mother. And yet—alas! alas! still it must flow when I think of my cherub Reuben. Oh! Mr. Hartley, why did we not know you a week sooner—my darling had not then died?"

"God gives and takes away, my lady," answered Hartley; "and you must remember that two are restored to you out of three. It is far from certain that the treatment I have used towards the convalescents would have brought through their brother; for the case, as reported to me, was of a very inveterate description."

"Doctor," said Witherington, his voice testifying more emotion that he usually or willingly gave way to, "you can comfort the sick in spirit as well as the sick in body. But it is time we settle our wager. You betted your reputation, which remains with you, increased by all the credit due to your eminent success, against a thousand gold mohurs, the value of which you will find in that pocket-book."

"General Witherington," said Hartley, "you are wealthy, and entitled to be generous; I am poor, and not entitled to decline whatever may be, even in a liberal sense, a compensation for my professional attendance. But there is a bound to extravagance, both in giving and accepting; and I must not hazard the newly-acquired reputation with which you flatter me by giving room to have it said that I fleeced the parents when their feelings were all afloat with anxiety for their children. Allow me to divide this large sum: one half I will thankfully retain, as a most liberal recompense for my labor; and if you still think you owe me anything, let me have it in the advantage of your good opinion and countenance."

"If I acquiesce in your proposal, Doctor Hartley," said the General, reluctantly receiving back a part of the con-

tents of the pocket-book, "it is because I hope to serve you with my interest even better than with my purse."

"And indeed, sir," replied Hartley, "it was upon your interest that I am just about to make a small claim."

The General and his lady spoke both in the same breath, to assure him his boon was granted before asked.

"I am not so sure of that," said Hartley; "for it respects a point on which I have heard say that your Excellency is rather inflexible—the discharge of a recruit."

"My duty makes me so," replied the General. "You know the sort of fellows that we are obliged to content ourselves with: they get drunk, grow pot-valiant, enlist overnight, and repent next morning. If I am to dismiss all those who pretend to have been trepanned, we should have few volunteers remaining behind. Every one has some idle story of the promises of a swaggering Sergeant Kite. It is impossible to attend them. But let me hear yours, however."

"Mine is a very singular case. The party has been robbed of a thousand pounds."

"A recruit for this service possessing a thousand pounds! My dear doctor, depend upon it the fellow has gulled you. Bless my heart, would a man who had a thousand pounds think of enlisting as a private sentinel?"

"He had no such thoughts," answered Hartley. "He was persuaded by the rogue whom he trusted that he was to have a commission."

"Then his friend must have been Tom Hillary, or the devil; for no other could possess so much cunning and impudence. He will certainly find his way to the gallows at last. Still this story of the thousand pounds seems a touch even beyond Tom Hillary. What reason have you to think that this fellow ever had such a sum of money?"

"I have the best reason to know it for certain," answered Hartley. "He and I served our time together, under the same excellent master; and when he became of age, not liking the profession which he had studied, and obtaining possession of his little fortune, he was deceived by the promises of this same Hillary."

"Who has had him locked up in our well-ordered hospital yonder?" said the General.

"Even so, please your Excellency," replied Hartley; "not, I think, to cure him of any complaint, but to give him the opportunity of catching one, which would silence all inquiries."

"The matter shall be closely looked into. But how miserably careless the young man's friends must have been to let a raw lad go into the world with such a companion and guide as Tom Hillary, and such a sum as a thousand pounds in his pocket. His parents had better have knocked him on the head. It certainly was not done like canny Northumberland, as my servant Winter calls it."

"The youth must indeed have had strangely hard-hearted or careless parents," said Mrs. Witherington, in accents of pity.

"He never knew them, madam," said Hartley; "there was a mystery on the score of his birth. A cold, unwilling, and almost unknown hand dealt him out his portion when he came of lawful age, and he was pushed into the world like a bark forced from shore without rudder, compass, or pilot."

Here General Witherington involuntarily looked to his lady, while guided by a similar impulse, her looks were turned upon him. They exchanged a momentary glance of deep and peculiar meaning, and then the eyes of both were fixed on the ground.

"Were you brought up in Scotland?" said the lady, addressing herself, in a faltering voice, to Hartley. "And what was your master's name?"

"I served my apprenticeship with Mr. Gideon Gray, of the town of Middlemas," said Hartley.

"Middlemas! Gray!" repeated the lady, and fainted away.

Hartley offered the succors of his profession; the husband flew to support her head, and the instant that Mrs. Witherington began to recover he whispered to her, in a tone betwixt entreaty and warning, "Zilia, beware—beware!"

Some imperfect sounds which she had begun to frame died away upon her tongue.

"Let me assist you to your dressing-room, my love," said her obviously anxious husband.

She arose with the action of an automaton, which moves at the touch of a spring, and half-hanging upon her husband, half-dragging herself on by her own efforts, had nearly reached the door of the room, when Hartley, following, asked if he could be of any service.

"No, sir," said the General, sternly: "this is no case for a stranger's interference; when you are wanted I will send for you."

Hartley stepped back on receiving a rebuff in a tone so different from that which General Witherington had used towards him in their previous intercourse, and [was] disposed, for the first time, to give credit to public report, which assigned to that gentleman, with several good qualities, the character of a very proud and haughty man. "Hitherto," he thought, "I have seen him tamed by sorrow and anxiety; now the mind is regaining its natural tension. But he must in decency interest himself for this unhappy Middlemas."

The General returned into the apartment a minute or two afterwards, and addressed Hartley in his usual tone of politeness, though apparently still under great embarrassement which he in vain endeavored to conceal.

"Mrs. Witherington is better, he said, "and will be glad to see you before dinner. You dine with us, I hope?"

Hartley bowed.

"Mrs. Witherington is rather subject to this sort of nervous fits, and she has been much harassed of late by grief and apprehension. When she recovers from them, it is a few minutes before she can collect her ideas, and during such intervals—to speak very confidentially to you, my dear Doctor Hartley—she speaks sometimes about imaginary events which have never happened, and sometimes about distressing occurrences in an early period of life. I am not, therefore, willing that any one but myself, or her old attendant, Mrs. Lopez, should be with her on such occasions."

Hartley admitted that a certain degree of light-headedness was often the consequence of nervous fits.

The General proceeded. "As to this young man—this friend of yours—this Richard Middlemas—did you not call him so?"

"Not that I recollect," answered Hartley; "but your Excellency has hit upon his name."

"That is odd enough. Certainly you said something about Middlemas?" replied General Witherington.

"I mentioned the name of the town," said Hartley.

"Ay, and I caught it up as the name of the recruit. I was indeed occupied at the moment by my anxiety about my wife. But this Middlemas, since such is his name, is a wild young fellow, I suppose?"

"I should do him wrong to say so, your Excellency. He may have had his follies like other young men; but his conduct has, so far as I know, been respectable; but, considering we lived in the same house, we were not very intimate."

"That is bad; I should have liked him—that is—it would

have been happy for him to have had a friend like you. But I suppose you studied too hard for him. He would be a soldier, ha? Is he good-looking?"

"Remarkably so," replied Hartley; "and has a very prepossessing manner."

"Is his complexion dark or fair?" asked the General.

"Rather uncommonly dark," said Hartley—"darker, if I may use the freedom, than your Excellency's."

"Nay, then, he must be a black ouzel indeed! Does he understand languages?"

"Latin and French tolerably well."

"Of course he cannot fence or dance?"

"Pardon me, sir, I am no great judge; but Richard is reckoned to do both with uncommon skill."

"Indeed! Sum this up, and it sounds well. Handsome, accomplished in exercises, moderately learned, perfectly well-bred, not unreasonably wild. All this comes too high for the situation of a private sentinel. He must have a commission, doctor—entirely for your sake."

"Your Excellency is generous."

"It shall be so; and I will find means to make Tom Hillary disgorge his plunder, unless he prefers being hanged, a fate he has long deserved. You cannot go back to the hospital to-day. You dine with us, and you know Mrs. Witherington's fears of infection; but to-morrow find out your friend. Winter shall see him equipped with everything needful. Tom Hillary shall repay advances, you know; and he must be off with the first detachment of the recruits, in the "Middlesex" Indiaman, which sails from the Downs on Monday fortnight; that is, if you think him fit for the voyage. I daresay the poor fellow is sick of the Isle of Wight."

"Your Excellency will permit the young man to pay his respects to you before his departure?"

"To what purpose, sir?" said the General, hastily and peremptorily; but instantly added, "You are right; I should like to see him. Winter shall let him know the time, and take horses to fetch him hither. But he must have been out of the hospital for a day or two; so the sooner you can set him at liberty the better. In the mean time, take him to your own lodgings, doctor; and do not let him form any intimacies with the officers, or any others, in this place, where he may light on another Hillary."

Had Hartley been as well acquainted as the reader with the circumstances of young Middlemas's birth, he might

have drawn decisive conclusions from the behavior of General Witherington while his comrade was the topic of conversation. But as Mr. Gray and Middlemas himself were both silent on the subject, he knew little of it but from general report, which his curiosity had never induced him to scrutinize minutely. Nevertheless, what he did apprehend interested him so much, that he resolved upon trying a little experiment, in which he thought there could be no great harm. He placed on his finger the remarkable ring entrusted to his care by Richard Middlemas, and endeavored to make it conspicuous in approaching Mrs. Witherington, taking care, however, that this occurred during her husband's absence. Her eyes had no sooner caught a sight of the gem than they became riveted to it, and she begged a nearer sight of it, as strongly resembling one which she had given to a friend. Taking the ring from his finger, and placing it in her emaciated hand, Hartley informed her it was the property of the friend in whom he had just been endeavoring to interest the General. Mrs. Witherington retired in great emotion, but next day summoned Hartley to a private interview, the particulars of which, so far as are necessary to be known, shall be afterwards related.

On the succeeding day after these important discoveries, Middlemas, to his great delight, was rescued from his seclusion in the hospital, and transferred to his comrade's lodgings in the town of Ryde, of which Hartley himself was a rare inmate, the anxiety of Mrs. Witherington detaining him at the General's house long after his medical attendance might have been dispensed with.

Within two or three days a commission arrived for Richard Middlemas as a lieutenant in the service of the East India Company. Winter, by his master's orders, put the wardrobe of the young officer on a suitable footing; while Middlemas, enchanted at finding himself at once emancipated from his late dreadful difficulties and placed under the protection of a man of such importance as the General, obeyed implicitly the hints transmitted to him by Hartley, and enforced by Winter, and abstained from going into public, or forming acquaintances with any one. Even Hartley himself he saw seldom; and, deep as were his obligations, he did not perhaps greatly regret the absence of one whose presence always affected him with a sense of humiliation and abasement.

CHAPTER VIII

THE evening before he was to sail for the Downs, where the "Middlesex" lay ready to weigh anchor, the new lieutenant was summoned by Winter to attend him to the General's residence, for the purpose of being introduced to his patron, to thank him at once and to bid him farewell. On the road the old man took the liberty of schooling his companion concerning the respect which he ought to pay to his master, "who was, though a kind and generous man as ever came from Northumberland, extremely rigid in punctiliously exacting the degree of honor which was his due."

While they were advancing towards the house, the General and his wife expected their arrival with breathless anxiety. They were seated in a superb drawing-room, the General behind a large chandelier, which, shaded opposite to his face, threw all the light to the other side of the table, so that he could observe any person placed there without becoming the subject of observation in turn. On a heap of cushions, wrapped in a glittering drapery of gold and silver muslins, mingled with shawls, a luxury which was then a novelty in Europe, sate, or rather reclined, his lady, who, past the full meridian of beauty, retained charms enough to distinguish her as one who had been formerly a very fine woman, though her mind seemed occupied by the deepest emotion.

"Zilia," said her husband, "you are unable for what you have undertaken; take my advice—retire; you shall know all and everything that passes—but retire. To what purpose should you cling to the idle wish of beholding for a moment a being whom you can never again look upon?"

"Alas!" answered the lady, "and is not your declaration that I shall never see him more a sufficient reason that I should wish to see him now—should wish to imprint on my memory the features and the form which I am never again to behold while we are in the body? Do not, my Richard, be more cruel than was my poor father, even when his wrath was in its bitterness. He let me look upon my infant, and its cherub face dwelt with me, and was my comfort, among the years of unutterable sorrow in which my youth wore away."

"It is enough, Zilia: you have desired this boon; I have granted it, and, at whatever risk, my promise shall be kept. But think how much depends on this fatal secret—your rank and estimation in society—my honor interested that that estimation should remain uninjured. Zilia, the moment that the promulgation of such a secret gives prudes and scandal-mongers a right to treat you with scorn will be fraught with unutterable misery, perhaps with bloodshed and death, should a man dare to take up the rumor."

"You shall be obeyed, my husband," answered Zilia, "in all that the frailness of nature will permit. But oh, God of my fathers, of what clay hast Thou fashioned us, poor mortals, who dread so much the shame which follows sin, yet repent so little for the sin itself!" In a minute afterwards steps were heard; the door opened, Winter announced Lieutenant Middlemas, and the unconscious son stood before his parents.

Witherington started involuntarily up, but immediately constrained himself to assume the easy deportment with which a superior receives a dependant, and which, in his own case, was usually mingled with a certain degree of hauteur. The mother had less command of herself. She too sprung up, as if with the intention of throwing herself on the neck of her son, for whom she had travailed and sorrowed. But the warning glance of her husband arrested her, as if by magic, and she remained standing, with her beautiful head and neck somewhat advanced, her hands clasped together, and extended forward in the attitude of motion, but motionless, nevertheless, as a marble statue, to which the sculptor has given all the appearance of life, but cannot impart its powers. So strange a gesture and posture might have excited the young officer's surprise; but the lady stood in the shade, and he was so intent in looking upon his patron that he was scarce even conscious of Mrs. Witherington's presence.

"I am happy in this opportunity," said Middlemas, observing that the General did not speak, "to return my thanks to General Witherington, to whom they never can be sufficiently paid."

The sound of his voice, though uttering words so indifferent, seemed to dissolve the charm which kept his mother motionless. She sighed deeply, relaxed the rigidity of her posture, and sunk back on the cushions from which she had started up. Middlemas turned a look towards her at the sound of the sigh and the rustling of her drapery.

The General hastened to speak. "My wife, Mr. Middlemas, has been unwell of late; your friend, Mr. Hartley, might mention it to you—an affection of the nerves."

Mr. Middlemas was, of course, sorry and concerned.

"We have had distress in our family, Mr. Middlemas, from the ultimate and heart-breaking consequences of which we have escaped by the skill of your friend, Mr. Hartley. We will be happy if it is in our power to repay a part of our obligations in services to his friend and *protégé*, Mr. Middlemas."

"I am only acknowledged as *his protégé*, then," *thought* Richard; but he *said*, "Every one must envy his friend in having had the distinguished good fortune to be of use to General Witherington and his family."

"You have received your commission, I presume. Have you any particular wish or desire respecting your destination?"

"No, may it please your Excellency," answered Middlemas. "I suppose Hartley would tell your Excellency my unhappy state—that I am an orphan, deserted by the parents who cast me on the wide world, an outcast about whom nobody knows or cares, except to desire that I should wander far enough, and live obscurely enough, not to disgrace them by their connection with me."

Zilia wrung her hands as he spoke, and drew her muslin veil closely around her head, as if to exclude the sounds which excited her mental agony.

"Mr. Hartley was not particularly communicative about your affairs," said the General, "nor do I wish to give you the pain of entering into them. What I desire to know is, if you are pleased with your destination to Madras?"

"Perfectly, please your Excellency—anywhere, so that there is no chance of meeting the villain Hillary."

"Oh! Hillary's services are too necessary in the purlieus of St. Giles's, the lowlights of Newcastle, and such-like places, where human carrion can be picked up, to be permitted to go to India. However, to show you the knave has some grace, there are the notes of which you were robbed. You will find them the very same paper which you lost, except a small sum which the rogue had spent, but which a friend has made up, in compassion for your sufferings."

Richard Middlemas sank on one knee, and kissed the hand which restored him to independence.

"Pshaw!" said the General, "you are a silly young man"; but he withdrew not his hand from his caresses.

This was one of the occasions on which Dick Middlemas could be oratorical.

"O, my more than father," he said, "how much greater a debt do I owe to you than to the unnatural parents who brought me into this world by their sin, and deserted me through their cruelty!"

Zilia, as she heard these cutting words, flung back her veil, raising it on both hands till it floated behind her like a mist, and then giving a faint groan, sunk down in a swoon. Pushing Middlemas from him with a hasty movement, General Witherington flew to his lady's assistance, and carried her in his arms, as if she had been a child, into the ante-room, where an old servant waited with the means of restoring suspended animation, which the unhappy husband too truly anticipated might be useful. These were hastily employed, and succeeded in calling the sufferer to life, but in a state of mental emotion that was terrible.

Her mind was obviously impressed by the last words which her son had uttered. "Did you hear him, Richard?" she exclaimed, in accents terribly loud, considering the exhausted state of her strength—"did you hear the words? It was Heaven speaking our condemnation by the voice of our own child. But do not fear, my Richard, do not weep! I will answer the thunder of Heaven with its own music."

She flew to a harpsichord which stood in the room, and, while the servant and master gazed on each other, as if doubting whether her senses were about to leave her entirely, she wandered over the keys, producing a wilderness of harmony, composed of passages recalled by memory, or combined by her own musical talent, until at length her voice and instrument united in one of those magnificent hymns in which her youth had praised her Maker, with voice and harp, like the royal Hebrew who composed it. The tear ebbed insensibly from the eyes which she turned upwards; her vocal tones, combining with those of the instrument, rose to a pitch of brilliancy seldom attained by the most distinguished performers, and then sunk into a dying cadence, which fell, never again to rise—for the songstress had died with her strain.

The horror of the distracted husband may be conceived, when all efforts to restore life proved totally ineffectual. Servants were despatched for medical men—Hartley, and every other who could be found. The General precipitated himself into the apartment they had so lately left, and in his haste ran against Middlemas, who, at the sound of the

music from the adjoining apartment, had naturally approached nearer to the door, and, surprised and startled by the sort of clamor, hasty steps, and confused voices which ensued, had remained standing there, endeavoring to ascertain the cause of so much disorder.

The sight of the unfortunate young man wakened the General's stormy passions to frenzy. He seemed to recognize his son only as the cause of his wife's death. He seized him by the collar, and shook him violently as he dragged him into the chamber of mortality.

"Come hither," he said, "thou for whom a life of lowest obscurity was too mean a fate—come hither, and look on the parents whom thou hast so much envied—whom thou hast so often cursed. Look at that pale emaciated form, a figure of wax, rather than flesh and blood : that is thy mother—that is the unhappy Zilia Monçada, to whom thy birth was the source of shame and misery, and to whom thy ill-omened presence has now brought death itself. And behold me"—he pushed the lad from him, and stood up erect, looking wellnigh in gesture and figure the apostate spirit he described—"behold me," he said—"see you not my hair streaming with sulphur, my brow scathed with lightning ? I am the Arch-Fiend—I am the father whom you seek—I am the accursed Richard Tresham, the seducer of Zilia, and the father of her murderer !"

Hartley entered while this horrid scene was passing. All attention to the deceased, he instantly saw, would be thrown away ; and understanding, partly from Winter, partly from the tenor of the General's frantic discourse, the nature of the disclosure which had occurred, he hastened to put an end, if possible, to the frightful and scandalous scene which had taken place, aware how delicately the General felt on the subject of reputation, he assailed him with remonstrances on such conduct, in presence of so many witnesses. But the mind had ceased to answer to that once powerful keynote.

"I care not if the whole world hear my sin and my punishment," said Witherington. "It shall not be again said of me that I fear shame more than I repent sin. I feared shame only for Zilia, and Zilia is dead."

"But her memory, General—spare the memory of your wife, in which the character of your children is involved."

"I have no children," said the desperate and violent man. "My Reuben is gone to Heaven, to prepare a lodging for

the angel who has now escaped from earth in a flood of harmony, which can only be equaled where she is gone. The other two cherubs will not survive their mother. I shall be, nay, I already feel myself, a childless man."

"Yet I am your son," replied Middlemas, in a tone sorrowful, but at the same time tinged with sullen resentment —"your son by your wedded wife. Pale as she lies there, I call upon you both to acknowledge my rights, and all who are present to bear witness to them."

"Wretch!" exclaimed the maniac father, "canst thou think of thine own sordid rights in the midst of death and frenzy? My son! Thou art the fiend who hast occasioned my wretchedness in this world, and who will share my eternal misery in the next. Hence from my sight, and my curse go with thee!"

His eyes fixed on the ground, his arms folded on his breast, the haughty and dogged spirit of Middlemas yet seemed to meditate reply. But Hartley, Winter, and other bystanders interfered, and forced him from the apartment. As they endeavored to remonstrate with him, he twisted himself out of their grasp, ran to the stables, and seizing the first saddled horse that he found, out of many that had been in haste got ready to seek for assistance, he threw himself on its back and rode furiously off. Hartley was about to mount and follow him; but Winter and the other domestics threw themselves around him, and implored him not to desert their unfortunate master at a time when the influence which he had acquired over him might be the only restraint on the violence of his passions.

"He had a *coup de soleil* in India," whispered Winter, "and is capable of anything in his fits. These cowards cannot control him, and I am old and feeble."

Satisfied that General Witherington was a greater object of compassion than Middlemas, whom besides he had no hope of overtaking, and who he believed was safe in his own keeping, however violent might be his present emotions, Hartley returned where the greater emergency demanded his immediate care.

He found the unfortunate general contending with the domestics, who endeavored to prevent his making his way to the apartment where his children slept, and exclaiming furiously, "Rejoice, my treasures—rejoice! He has fled who would proclaim your father's crime and your mother's dishonor! He has fled, never to return, whose life has been the death of one parent and the ruin of another! Courage,

my children, your father is with you—he will make his way to you through a hundred obstacles!"

The domestics, intimidated and undecided, were giving way to him, when Adam Hartley approached, and, placing himself before the unhappy man, fixed his eye firmly on the General's, while he said in a low but stern voice—"Madman, would you kill your children?"

The General seemed staggered in his resolution, but still attempted to rush past him. But Hartley, seizing him by the collar of his coat on each side, "You are my prisoner," he said; "I command you to follow me."

"Ha! prisoner, and for high treason? Dog, thou hast met thy death!"

The distracted man drew a poniard from his bosom, and Hartley's strength and resolution might not perhaps have saved his life, had not Winter mastered the General's right hand, and contrived to disarm him.

"I am your prisoner, then," he said; "use me civilly—and let me see my wife and children."

"You shall see them to-morrow," said Hartley; "follow us instantly, and without the least resistance."

General Witherington followed like a child, with the air of one who is suffering for a cause in which he glories.

"I am not ashamed of my principles," he said—"I am willing to die for my king."

Without exciting his frenzy, by contradicting the fantastic idea which occupied his imagination, Hartley continued to maintain over his patient the ascendency he had acquired. He caused him to be led to his apartment, and beheld him suffer himself to be put to bed. Administering then a strong composing-draught, and causing a servant to sleep in the room, he watched the unfortunate man till dawn of morning.

General Witherington awoke in his full senses, and apparent conscious of his real situation, which he testified by low groans, sobs, and tears. When Hartley drew near his bedside he knew him perfectly, and said, "Do not fear me—the fit is over; leave me now, and see after yonder unfortunate. Let him leave Britain as soon as possible, and go where his fate calls him, and where we can never meet more. Winter knows my ways, and will take care of me."

Winter gave the same advice. "I can answer," he said, "for my master's security at present; but in Heaven's name, prevent his ever meeting again with that obdurate young man!"

CHAPTER IX

Well, then, the world's mine oyster,
Which I with sword will open.
Merry Wives of Windsor.

WHEN Adam Hartley arrived at his lodgings in the sweet little town of Ryde, his first inquiries were after his comrade. He had arrived last night late, man and horse all in a foam. He made no reply to any questions about supper or the like, but, snatching a candle, ran upstairs into his apartment, and shut and double-locked the door. The servants only supposed that, being something intoxicated, he had ridden hard, and was unwilling to expose himself.

Hartley went to the door of his chamber, not without some apprehensions; and after knocking and calling more than once, received at length the welcome return, "Who is there?"

On Hartley announcing himself, the door opened, and Middlemas appeared, well dressed, and with his hair arranged and powdered; although, from the appearance of the bed, it had not been slept in on the preceding night, and Richard's countenance, haggard and ghastly, seemed to bear witness to the same fact. It was, however, with an affectation of indifference that he spoke.

"I congratulate you on your improvement in worldly knowledge, Adam. It is just the time to desert the poor heir, and stick by him that is in immediate possession of the wealth."

"I stayed last night at General Witherington's," answered Hartley, "because he is extremely ill."

"Tell him to repent of his sins, then," said Richard. "Old Gray used to say, a doctor had as good a title to give ghostly advice as a parson. Do you remember Doctor Dulberry, the minister, calling him an interloper? Ha! ha! ha!"

"I am surprised at this style of language from one in your circumstances."

"Why, ay," said Middlemas, with a bitter smile, "it would be difficult to most men to keep up their spirits, after gaining and losing father, mother, and a good inheritance,

all in the same day. But I had always a turn for philosophy."

"I really do not understand you, Mr. Middlemas."

"Why, I found my parents yesterday, did I not?" answered the young man. "My mother, as you know, had waited, but that moment to die, and my father to become distracted; and I conclude both were contrived purposely to cheat me of my inheritance, as he has taken up such a prejudice against me."

"Inheritance!" repeated Hartley, bewildered by Richard's calmness, and half suspecting that the insanity of the father was hereditary in the family. "In Heaven's name, recollect yourself, and get rid of these hallucinations. What inheritance are you dreaming of?"

"That of my mother, to be sure, who must have inherited old Monçada's wealth; and to whom should it descend, save to her children? I am the eldest of them—that fact cannot be denied."

"But consider, Richard—recollect yourself."

"I do," said Richard; "and what then?"

"Then you cannot but remember," said Hartley, "that, unless there was a will in your favor, your birth prevents you from inheriting."

"You are mistaken, sir: I am legitimate. Yonder sickly brats whom you rescued from the grave are not more legitimate than I am. Yes, our parents could not allow the air of Heaven to breathe on them; me they committed to the winds and the waves. I am nevertheless their lawful child, as well as their puling offspring of advanced age and decayed health. I saw them, Adam: Winter showed the nursery to me while they were gathering courage to receive me in the drawing-room. There they lay, the children of predilection, the riches of the East expended that they might sleep soft and awake in magnificence. I, the eldest brother—the heir—I stood beside their bed in the borrowed dress which I had so lately exchanged for the rags of an hospital. Their couches breathed the richest perfumes, while I was reeking from a pest-house; and I—I repeat it—the heir, the produce of their earliest and best love, was thus treated. No wonder that my look was that of a basilisk."

"You speak as if you were possessed with an evil spirit," said Hartley; "or else you labor under a strange delusion."

"You think those only are legally married over whom a drowsy parson has read the ceremony from a dog's-eared prayer-book? It may be so in your English law; but Scot-

land makes Love himself the priest. A vow betwixt a fond couple, the blue heaven alone witnessing, will protect a confiding girl against the perjury of a fickle swain, as much as if a dean had performed the rites in the loftiest cathedral in England. Nay, more ; if the child of love be acknowledged by the father at the time when he is baptized, if he present the mother to strangers of respectability as his wife, the laws of Scotland will not allow him to retract the justice which has, in these actions, been done to the female whom he has wronged, or the offspring of their mutual love. This General Tresham, or Witherington, treated my unhappy mother as his wife before Gray and others, quartered her as such in the family of a respectable man, gave her the same name by which he himself chose to pass for the time. He presented me to the priest as his lawful offspring ; and the law of Scotland, benevolent to the helpless child, will not allow him now to disown what he so formally admitted. I know my rights, and am determined to claim them."

"You do not then intend to go on board the 'Middlesex ?' Think a little. You will lose your voyage and your commission."

"I will save my birthright," answered Middlemas. "When I thought of going to India, I knew not my parents, or how to make good the rights which I had through them. That riddle is solved. I am entitled to at least a third of Monçada's estate, which, by Winter's account, is considerable. But for you, and your mode of treating the small-pox, I should have had the whole. Little did I think, when old Gray was likely to have his wig pulled off for putting out fires, throwing open windows, and exploding whiskey and water, that the new system of treating the small-pox was to cost me so many thousand pounds."

"You are determined, then," said Hartley, "on this wild course ?"

"I know my rights and am determined to make them available," answered the obstinate youth.

"Mr. Richard Middlemas, I am sorry for you."

"Mr. Adam Hartley, I beg to know why I am honored by your sorrow."

"I pity you," answered Hartley, "both for the obstinacy of selfishness which can think of wealth after the scene you saw last night, and for the idle vision which leads you to believe that you can obtain possession of it."

"Selfish !" cried Middlemas ; "why, I am a dutiful son, laboring to clear the memory of a calumniated mother.

And am I a visionary? Why, it was to this hope that I awakened when old Monçada's letter to Gray, devoting me to perpetual obscurity, first roused me to a sense of my situation, and dispelled the dreams of my childhood. Do you think that I would ever have submitted to the drudgery which I shared with you, but that, by doing so, I kept in view the only traces of these unnatural parents, by means of which I proposed to introduce myself to their notice, and, if necessary, enforce the rights of a legitimate child? The silence and death of Monçada broke my plans, and it was then only I reconciled myself to the thoughts of India."

"You were very young to have known so much of the Scottish law, at the time when we were first acquainted," said Hartley. "But I can guess your instructor."

"No less authority than Tom Hillary's," replied Middlemas. "His good counsel on that head is a reason why I do not now prosecute him to the gallows."

"I judged as much," replied Hartley; "for I heard him, before I left Middlemas, debating the point with Mr. Lawford; and I recollect perfectly that he stated the law to be such as you now lay down."

"And what said Lawford in answer?" demanded Middlemas.

"He admitted," replied Hartley, "that, in circumstances where the case was doubtful, such presumptions of legitimacy might be admitted. But he said they were liable to be controlled by positive and precise testimony, as, for instance the evidence of the mother declaring the illegitimacy of the child."

"But there can exist none such in my case," said Middlemas hastily, and with marks of alarm.

"I will not deceive you, Mr. Middlemas, though I fear I cannot help giving you pain. I had yesterday a long conference with your mother, Mrs. Witherington, in which she acknowledged you as her son, but a son born before marriage. This express declaration will, therefore, put an end to the suppositions on which you ground your hopes. If you please, you may hear the contents of her declaration, which I have in her own handwriting."

"Confusion! is the cup to be forever dashed from my lips?" muttered Richard; but recovering his composure by exertion of the self-command of which he possessed so large a portion, he desired Hartley to proceed with his communication. Hartley accordingly proceeded to inform him of

the particulars preceding his birth and those which followed after it; while Middlemas, seated on a sea-chest, listened with inimitable composure to a tale which went to root up the flourishing hopes of wealth which he had lately so fondly entertained.

Zilia Monçada was the only child of a Portuguese Jew of great wealth, who had come to London in prosecution of his commerce. Among the few Christians who frequented his house, and occasionally his table, was Richard Tresham, a gentleman of a high Northumbrian family, deeply engaged in the service of Charles Edward during his short invasion, and, though holding a commission in the Portugese service, still an object of suspicion to the British government on account of his well-known courage and Jacobitical principles. The high-bred elegance of this gentleman, together with his complete acquaintance with the Portuguese language and manners, had won the intimacy of old Monçada, and, alas! the heart of the inexperienced Zilia, who, beautiful as an angel, had as little knowledge of the world and its wickedness as the lamb that is but a week old.

Tresham made his proposals to Monçada, perhaps in a manner which too evidently showed that he conceived the high-born Christian was degrading himself in asking an alliance with the wealthy Jew. Monçada rejected his proposals, forbade him his house, but could not prevent the lovers from meeting in private. Tresham made a dishonorable use of the opportunities which the poor Zilia so incautiously afforded, and the consequence was her ruin. The lover, however, had every purpose of righting the injury which he had inflicted, and, after various plans of secret marriage, which were rendered abortive by the difference of religion and other circumstances, flight for Scotland was determined on. The hurry of the journey, the fear and anxiety to which Zilia was subject, brought on her confinement several weeks before the usual time, so that they were compelled to accept of the assistance and accommodation offered by Mr. Gray. They had not been there many hours ere Tresham heard, by the medium of some sharp-sighted or keen-eared friend, that there were warrants out against him for treasonable practises. His correspondence with Charles Edward had become known to Monçada during the period of their friendship; he betrayed it in vengeance to the British cabinet, and warrants were issued, in which, at Monçada's request, his daughtor's name was included. This might be of use, he apprehended, to enable him to separate

his daughter from Tresham, should he find the fugitives actually married. How far he succeeded the reader already knows, as well as the precautions which he took to prevent the living evidence of his child's frailty from being known to exist. His daughter he carried with him, and subjected her to severe restraint, which her own reflections rendered doubly bitter. It would have completed his revenge had the author of Zilia's misfortunes been brought to the scaffold for his political offenses. But Tresham skulked among friends in the Highlands, and escaped until the affair blew over.

He afterwards entered into the East India Company's service, under his mother's name of Witherington, which concealed the Jacobite and rebel until these terms were forgotten. His skill in military affairs soon raised him to riches and eminence. When he returned to Britain his first inquiries were after the family of Monçada. His fame, his wealth, and the late conviction that his daughter never would marry any but him who had her first love induced the old man to give that encouragement to General Witherington which he had always denied to the poor and outlawed Major Tresham ; and the lovers, after having been fourteen years separated, were at length united in wedlock.

General Witherington eagerly concurred in the earnest wish of his father-in-law, that every remembrance of former events should be buried, by leaving the fruit of the early and unhappy intrigue suitably provided for, but in a distant and obscure situation. Zilia thought far otherwise. Her heart longed, with a mother's longing, towards the object of her first maternal tenderness, but she dared not place herself in opposition at once to the will of her father and the decision of her husband. The former, his religious prejudices much effaced by his long residence in England, had given consent that she should conform to the established religion of her husband and her country ; the latter, haughty as we have described him, made it his pride to introduce the beautiful convert among his high-born kindred. The discovery of her former frailty would have proved a blow to her respectability which he dreaded like death ; and it could not long remain a secret from his wife that, in consequence of a severe illness in India, even his reason became occasionally shaken by anything which violently agitated his feelings. She had, therefore, acquiesced in patience and silence in the course of policy which Monçada had devised, and which her husband anxiously and warmly approved. Yet her thoughts, even when their marriage was blessed with other offspring,

anxiously reverted to the banished and outcast child who had first been clasped to the maternal bosom.

All these feelings, "subdued and cherished long," were set afloat in full tide by the unexpected discovery of this son, redeemed from a lot of extreme misery, and placed before his mother's imagination in circumstances so disastrous.

It was in vain that her husband had assured her that he would secure the young man's prosperity by his purse and his interest. She could not be satisfied until she had herself done something to alleviate the doom of banishment to which her eldest-born was thus condemned. She was the more eager to do so, as she felt the extreme delicacy of her health, which was undermined by so many years of secret suffering.

Mrs. Witherington was, in conferring her maternal bounty, naturally led to employ the agency of Hartley, the companion of her son, and to whom, since the recovery of her younger children, she almost looked up as to a tutelar deity. She placed in his hand a sum of £2000, which she had at her own unchallenged disposal, with a request, uttered in the fondest and most affectionate terms, that it might be applied to the service of Richard Middlemas in the way Hartley should think most useful to him. She assured him of further support as it should be needed; and a note to the following purport was also entrusted to him, to be delivered when and where the prudence of Hartley should judge it proper to confide to him the secret of his birth.

"Oh, Benoni! Oh, child of my sorrow!" said this interesting document, "why should the eyes of thy unhappy mother be about to obtain permission to look on thee, since her arms were denied the right to fold thee to her bosom? May the God of Jews and of Gentiles watch over thee and guard thee! May He remove, in His good time, the darkness which rolls between me and the beloved of my heart—the first fruit of my unhappy, nay, unhallowed, affection. Do not—do not, my beloved, think thyself a lonely exile, while thy mother's prayers arise for thee at sunrise and at sunset, to call down every blessing on thy head—to invoke every power in thy protection and defense. Seek not to see me. Oh, why must I say so? But let me humble myself in the dust, since it is my own sin, my own folly, which I must blame; but seek not to see or speak with me—it might be the death of both. Confide thy thoughts to the excellent Hartley, who hath been the guardian angel of us

all, even as the tribes of Israel had each their guardian angel. What thou shalt wish, and he shall advise in thy behalf, shall be done, if in the power of a mother. And the love of a mother,—is it bounded by seas, or can deserts and distance measure its limits? Oh, child of my sorrow! Oh, Beroni! let thy spirit be with mine, as mine is with thee.

"Z. M."

All these arrangements being completed, the unfortunate lady next insisted with her husband that she should be permitted to see her son, in that parting interview which terminated so fatally. Hartley, therefore, now discharged as her executor the duty entrusted to him as her confidential agent.

"Surely," he thought, as, having finished his communication, he was about to leave the apartment—"surely the demons of ambition and avarice will unclose the talons which they have fixed upon this man, at a charm like this."

And indeed Richard's heart had been formed of the nether millstone had he not been duly affected by these first and last tokens of his mother's affection. He leaned his head upon a table, and his tears flowed plentifully. Hartley left him undisturbed for more than an hour, and on his return found him in nearly the same attitude in which he had left him.

"I regret to disturb you at this moment," he said, "but I still have a part of my duty to discharge. I must place in your possession the deposit which your mother made in my hands; and I must also remind you that time flies fast, and that you have scarce an hour or two to determine whether you will prosecute your Indian voyage under the new view of circumstances which I have opened to you."

Middlemas took the bills which his mother had bequeathed him. As he raised his head, Hartley could observe that his face was stained with tears. Yet he counted over the money with mercantile accuracy; and though he assumed the pen for the purpose of writing a discharge with an air of inconsolable dejection, yet he drew it up in good set terms, like one who had his senses much at his command.

"And now," he said, in a mournful voice, "give me my mother's narrative."

Hartley almost started, and answered hastily, "You have the poor lady's letter, which was addressed to yourself; the narrative is addressed to me. It is my warrant for disposing of a large sum of money; it concerns the rights of third parties, and I cannot part with it."

"Surely—surely it were better to deliver it into my hands, were it but to weep over it," answered Middlemas. "My fortune, Hartley, has been very cruel. You see that my parents proposed to have made me their undoubted heir; yet their purpose was disappointed by accident. And now my mother comes with well-intended fondness, and, while she means to advance my fortune, furnishes evidences to destroy it. Come—come Hartley, you must be conscious that my mother wrote those details entirely for my information. I am the rightful owner, and insist on having them."

"I am sorry I must insist on refusing your demand, answered Hartley, putting the papers in his pocket. "You ought to consider that, if this communication has destroyed the idle and groundless hopes which you have indulged in, it has, at the same time, more than trebled your capital; and that if there are some hundreds or thousands in the world richer than yourself, there are many millions not half so well provided. Set a brave spirit, then, against your fortune, and do not doubt your success in life."

His words seemed to sink into the gloomy mind of Middlemas. He stood silent for a moment, and then answered with a reluctant and insinuating voice—

"My dear Hartley, we have long been companions; you can have neither pleasure nor interest in ruining my hopes—you may find some in forwarding them. Monçada's fortune will enable me to allow five thousand pounds to the friend who should aid me in my difficulties."

"Good-morning to you, Mr. Middlemas," said Hartley, endeavoring to withdraw.

"One moment—one moment," said Middlemas, holding his friend by the button at the same time, "I meant to say ten thousand—and—and—marry whomsoever you like—I will not be your hindrance."

"You are a villain!" said Hartley, breaking from him, "and I always thought you so."

"And you," answered Middlemas, "are a fool, and I never thought you better. Off he goes. Let him—the game has been played and lost. I must hedge my bets: India must be my back-play."

All was in readiness for his departure. A small vessel and a favoring gale conveyed him and several other military gentlemen to the Downs, where the Indiaman which was to transport them from Europe lay ready for their reception.

His first feelings were sufficiently disconsolate. But accustomed from his infancy to conceal his internal thoughts,

he appeared in the course of a week the gayest and best-bred passenger who ever dared the long and weary space betwixt Old England and her Indian possessions. At Madras, where the sociable feelings of the resident inhabitants give ready way to enthusiasm in behalf of any stranger of agreeable qualities, he experienced that warm hospitality which distinguishes the British character in the East.

Middlemas was well received in company, and in the way of becoming an indispensable guest at every entertainment in the place, when the vessel on board of which Hartley acted as surgeon's mate arrived at the same settlement. The latter would not, from his situation, have been entitled to expect much civility and attention; but this disavantage was made up by his possessing the most powerful introductions from General Witherington, and from other persons of weight in Leadenhall Street, the General's friends, to the principal inhabitants in the settlement. He found himself once more, therefore, moving in the same sphere with Middlemas, and under the alternative of living with him on decent and distant terms, or of breaking off with him altogether.

The first of these courses might perhaps have been the wisest; but the other was most congenial to the blunt and plain character of Hartley, who saw neither propriety nor comfort in maintaining a show of friendly intercourse, to conceal hate, contempt, and mutual dislike.

The circle at Fort St. George was much more restricted at that time than it has been since. The coldness of the young men did not escape notice. It transpired that they had been once intimates and fellow-students; yet it was now found that they hesitated at accepting invitations to the same parties. Rumor assigned many different and incompatible reasons for this deadly breach, to which Hartley gave no attention whatever, while Lieutenant Middlemas took care to countenance those which represented the cause of the quarrel most favorably to himself.

"A little bit of rivalry had taken place," he said, when pressed by gentlemen for an explanation; "he had only had the good luck to get further in the good graces of a fair lady than his friend Hartley, who had made a quarrel of it, as they saw. He thought it very silly to keep up spleen, at such a distance of time and space. He was sorry, more for the sake of the strangeness of the appearance of the thing than anything else, although his friend had really some very good points about him."

While these whispers were working their effect in society, they did not prevent Hartley from receiving the most flattering assurances of encouragement and official promotion from the Madras government as opportunity should arise. Soon after, it was intimated to him that a medical appointment of a lucrative nature in a remote settlement was conferred on him, which removed him for some time from Madras and its neighborhood.

Hartley accordingly sailed on his distant expedition ; and it was observed that after his departure the character of Middlemas, as if some check had been removed, began to display itself in disagreeable colors. It was noticed that this young man, whose manners were so agreeable and so courteous during the first months after his arrival in India, began now to show symptoms of a haughty and overbearing spirit. He had adopted, for reasons which the reader may conjecture, but which appeared to be mere whim at Fort St. George, the name of Tresham in addition to that by which he had hitherto been distinguished, and in this he persisted with an obstinacy which belonged more to the pride than the craft of his character. The lieutenant-colonel of the regiment, an old cross-tempered martinet, did not choose to indulge the captain (such was now the rank of Middlemas) in this humor.

"He knew no officer," he said, "by any name save that which he bore in his commission," and he Middlemas'd the captain on all occasions.

One fatal evening, the captain was so much provoked as to intimate peremptorily "that he knew his own name best."

"Why, Captain Middlemas," replied the colonel, "it is not every child that knows its own father, so how can every man be so sure of his own name ?"

The bow was drawn at a venture, but the shaft found the rent in the armor and stung deeply. In spite of all the interposition which could be attempted, Middlemas insisted on challenging the colonel, who could be persuaded to no apology.

"If Captain Middlemas," he said, "thought the cap fitted, he was welcome to wear it."

The result was a meeting, in which, after the parties had exchanged shots, the seconds tendered their mediation. It was rejected by Middlemas, who at the second fire had the misfortune to kill his commanding officer. In consequence, he was obliged to fly from the British settlement ; for, being

universally blamed for having pushed the quarrel to extremity, there was little doubt that the whole severity of military discipline would be exercised upon the delinquent. Middlemas, therefore, vanished from Fort St. George, and, though the affair had made much noise at the time, was soon no longer talked of. It was understood, in general, that he had gone to seek that fortune at the court of some native prince which he could no longer hope for in the British settlements.

CHAPTER X

THREE years passed away after the fatal encounter mentioned in the last chapter, and Doctor Hartley, returning from his appointed mission, which was only temporary, received encouragement to settle in Madras in a medical capacity; and, upon having done so, soon had reason to think he had chosen a line in which he might rise to wealth and reputation. His practise was not confined to his countrymen, but much sought after among the natives, who, whatever may be their prejudices against the Europeans in other respects, universally esteem their superior powers in the medical profession. This lucrative branch of practise rendered it necessary that Hartley should make the Oriental languages his study, in order to hold communication with his patients without the intervention of an interpreter. He had enough of opportunities to practise as a linguist, for, in acknowledgment, as he used jocularly to say, of the large fees of the wealthy Moslemah and Hindoos, he attended the poor of all nations gratis, whenever he was called upon.

It so chanced, that one evening he was hastily summoned, by a message from the Secretary of the Government, to attend a patient of consequence. "Yet he is, after all, only a fakir," said the message. "You will find him at the tomb of Cara Razi, the Mohammedan saint and doctor, about one coss from the fort. Inquire for him by name of Barak el Hadgi. Such a patient promises no fees; but we know how little you care about the pagodas, and, besides, the Government is your paymaster on this occasion."

"That is the last matter to be thought on," said Hartley, and instantly repaired in his palanquin to the place pointed out to him.

The tomb of the *owliah*, or Mohammedan saint, Cara Razi, was a place held in much reverence by every good Mussulman. It was situated in the center of a grove of mangos and tamarind trees, and was built of red stone, having three domes, and minarets at every corner. There was a court in front, as usual, around which were cells constructed for the accommodation of the fakirs who visited the tomb from motives of devotion, and made a longer or shorter residence

there as they thought proper, subsisting upon the alms which the faithful never fail to bestow on them in exchange for the benefit of their prayers. These devotees were engaged day and night in reading verses of the Koran before the tomb, which was constructed of white marble, inscribed with sentences from the book of the Prophet, and with the various titles conferred by the Koran upon the Supreme Being. Such a sepulcher, of which there are many, is, with its appendages and attendants, respected during wars and revolutions, and no less by Feringis (Franks, that is) and Hindoos than by Mohammedans themselves. The fakirs, in return, act as spies for all parties, and are often employed in secret missions of importance.

Complying with the Mohammedan custom, our friend Hartley laid aside his shoes at the gates of the holy precincts, and avoiding to give offense by approaching near to the tomb, he went up to the principal *moullah*, or priest, who was distinguishable by the length of his beard and the size of the large wooden beads, with which the Mohammedans, like the Catholics, keep register of their prayers. Such a person, venerable by his age, sanctity of character, and his real or supposed contempt of worldly pursuits and enjoyments, is regarded as the head of an establishment of this kind.

The moullah is permitted by his situation to be more communicative with strangers than his younger brethren, who in the present instance remained with their eyes fixed on the Koran, muttering their recitations without noticing the European, or attending to what he said, as he inquired at their superior for Barak el Hadgi.

The moullah was seated on the earth, from which he did not arise, or show any mark of reverence ; nor did he interrupt the tale of the beads, which he continued to count assiduously while Hartley was speaking. When he finished, the old man raised his eyes, and looking at him with an air of distraction, as if he was endeavoring to recollect what he had been saying, he at length pointed to one of the cells, and resumed his devotions like one who felt impatient of whatever withdrew his attention from his sacred duties, were it but for an instant.

Hartley entered the cell indicated, with the usual salutation of "*Salam alaikum.*" His patient lay on a little carpet in a corner of the small whitewashed cell. He was a man of about forty, dressed in the black robe of his order, very much torn and patched. He wore a high, conical cap of

Tartarian felt, and had round his neck the string of black beads belonging to his order. His eyes and posture indicated suffering, which he was enduring with stoical patience.

"*Salam alaikum,*" said Hartley; "you are in pain, my father?" a title which he gave rather to the profession than to the years of the person he addressed.

"*Salam alaikum bema sabartem,*" answered the fakir. "Well is it for you that you have suffered patiently. The Book saith, such shall be the greeting of the angels to those who enter paradise."

The conversation being thus opened, the physician proceeded to inquire into the complaints of the patient, and to prescribe what he thought advisable. Having done this, he was about to retire, when, to his great surprise, the fakir tendered him a ring of some value.

"The wise," said Hartley, declining the present, and at the same time paying a suitable compliment to the fakir's cap and robe—"the wise of every country are brethren. My left hand takes no guerdon of my right."

"A Feringi can then refuse gold!" said the fakir, "I thought they took it from every hand, whether pure as that of an houri or leprous like Gehazi's, even as the hungry dog recketh not whether the flesh he eateth be of the camel of the prophet Saleth or of the ass of Degial, on whose head be curses!"

"The Book says," replied Hartley, "that it is Allah who closes and who enlarges the heart. Frank and Mussulman are all alike molded by His pleasure."

"My brother hath spoken wisely," answered the patient. "Welcome the disease, if it bring thee acquainted with a wise physician. For what saith the poet—'It is well to have fallen to the earth, if while groveling there thou shalt discover a diamond'?"

The physician made repeated visits to his patient, and continued to do so even after the health of El Hadgi was entirely restored. He had no difficulty in discerniug in him one of those secret agents frequently employed by Asiatic sovereigns. His intelligence, his learning, above all, his versatility and freedom from prejudices of every kind, left no doubt of Barak's possessing the necessary qualifications for conducting such delicate negotiations; while his gravity of habit and profession could not prevent his features from expressing occasionally a perception of humor, not usually seen in devotees of his class.

Barak el Hadgi talked often, amidst their private conversations, of the power and dignity of the Nawaub of Mysore; and Hartley had little doubt that he came from the court of Hyder Ali on some secret mission, perhaps for achieving a more solid peace betwixt that able and sagacious prince and the East India Company's Government, that which existed for the time being regarded on both parts as little more than a hollow and insincere truce. He told many stories to the advantage of this prince, who certainly was one of the wisest that Hindostan could boast, and amidst great crimes, perpetrated to gratify his ambition, displayed many instances of princely generosity, and, what was a little more surprising, of even-handed justice.

On one occasion, shortly before Barak el Hadgi left Madras, he visited the doctor, and partook of his sherbet, which he preferred to his own, perhaps because a few glasses of rum or brandy were usually added to enrich the compound. It might be owing to repeated applications to the jar which contained this generous fluid, that the pilgrim became more than usually frank in his communications, and, not contented with praising his Nawaub with the most hyperbolic eloquence, he began to insinuate the influence which he himself enjoyed with the Invincible, the Lord and Shield of the Faith of the Prophet.

"Brother of my soul," he said, "do but think if thou needest aught that the all-powerful Hyder Ali Khan Bahuder can give; and then use not the intercession of those who dwell in palaces, and wear jewels in their turbans, but seek the cell of thy brother at the great city, which is Seringapatam. And the poor fakir, in his torn cloak, shall better advance thy suit with the Nawaub"—for Hyder did not assume the title of Sultaun—"than they who sit upon seats of honor in the divan."

With these and sundry other expressions of regard, he exhorted Hartley to come into the Mysore, and look upon the face of the great prince, whose glance inspired wisdom and whose nod conferred wealth, so that folly or poverty could not appear before him. He offered at the same time to requite the kindness which Hartley had evinced to him, by showing him whatever was worthy the attention of a sage in the land of Mysore.

Hartley was not reluctant to promise to undertake the proposed journey, if the continuance of good understanding betwixt their governments should render it practicable, and in reality looked forward to the possibility of such an event

with a good deal of interest. The friends parted with mutual good wishes, after exchanging, in the Oriental fashion, such gifts as became sages, to whom knowledge was to be supposed dearer than wealth. Barak el Hadgi presented Hartley with a small quantity of the balsam of Mecca, very hard to be procured in an unadulterated form, and gave him at the same time a passport in a peculiar character, which he assured him would be respected by every officer of the Nawaub, should his friend be disposed to accomplish his visit to the Mysore. "The head of him who should disrespect this safe-conduct," he said, "shall not be more safe than that of the barley-stalk which the reaper has grasped in his hand."

Hartley requited these civilities by the present of a few medicines little used in the East, but such as he thought might, with suitable directions, be safely entrusted to a man so intelligent as his Moslem friend.

It was several months after Barak had returned to the interior of India that Hartley was astonished by an unexpected rencounter.

The ships from Europe had but lately arrived, and had brought over their usual cargo of boys longing to be commanders, and young women without any purpose of being married, but whom a pious duty to some brother, some uncle, or other male relative, brought to India to keep his house, until they should find themselves unexpectedly in one of their own. Doctor Hartley happened to attend a public breakfast given on this occasion by a gentleman high in the service. The roof of his friend had been recently enriched by a consignment of three nieces, whom the old gentleman, justly attached to his quiet hookah, and, it was said, to a pretty girl of color, desired to offer to the public, that he might have the fairest chance to get rid of his new guests as soon as possible. Hartley, who was thought a fish worthy casting a fly for, was contemplating this fair investment with very little interest, when he heard one of the company say to another in a low voice—

"Angels and ministers! there is our old acquaintance, the Queen of Sheba, returned upon our hands like unsalable goods."

Hartley looked in the same direction with the two who were speaking, and his eye was caught by a Semiramis-looking person, of unusual stature and amplitude, arrayed in a sort of riding-habit, but so formed and so looped and gallooned with lace, as made it resemble the upper tunic of a native

chief. Her robe was composed of crimson silk, rich with flowers of gold. She wore wide trousers of light blue silk, a fine scarlet shawl around her waist, in which was stuck a creeze, with a richly ornamented handle. Her throat and arms were loaded with chains and bracelets, and her turban, formed of a shawl similar to that worn around her waist, was decorated by a magnificent aigrette, from which a blue ostrich plume flowed in one direction and a red one in another. The brow, of European complexion, on which this tiara rested, was too lofty for beauty, but seemed made for command ; the aquiline nose retained its form, but the cheeks were a little sunken, and the complexion so very brilliant as to give strong evidence that the whole countenance had undergone a through repair since the lady had left her couch. A black female slave, richly dressed, stood behind her with a chowry, or cow's tail, having a silver handle, which she used to keep off the flies. From the mode in which she was addressed by those who spoke to her, this lady appeared a person of too much importance to be affronted or neglected, and yet one with whom none desired further communication than the occasion seemed in propriety to demand.

She did not, however, stand in need of attention. The well-known captain of an East Indian vessel lately arrived from Britain was sedulously polite to her ; and two or three gentlemen, whom Hartley knew to be engaged in trade, tended upon her as they would have done upon the safety of a rich argosy.

"For Heaven's sake, what is that for a Zenobia ?" said Hartley to the gentleman whose whisper had first attracted his attention to this lofty dame.

"Is it possible you do not know the Queen of Sheba ?" said the person of whom he inquired, no way loth to communicate the information demanded. "You must know, then, that she is the daughter of a Scotch emigrant, who lived and died at Pondicherry, a sergeant in Lally's regiment. She managed to marry a partisan officer named Montreville, a Swiss or Frenchman, I cannot tell which. After the surrender of Pondicherry, this hero and heroine —— But hey—what the devil are you thinking of ? If you stare at her that way you will make a scene ; for she will think nothing of scolding you across the table."

But, without attending to his friend's remonstrances, Hartley bolted from the table at which he sat, and made his way, with something less than the decorum which the rules

of society enjoin, towards the place where the lady in question was seated.

"The doctor is surely mad this morning——" said his friend Major Mercer to old Quartermaster Calder.

Indeed, Hartley was not perhaps strictly in his senses; for, looking at the Queen of Sheba as he listened to Major Mercer, his eye fell on a light female form beside her, so placed as if she desired to be eclipsed by the bulky form and flowing robes we have described, and to his extreme astonishment he recognized the friend of his childhood, the love of his youth—Menie Gray herself!

To see her in India was in itself astonishing. To see her apparently under such strange patronage greatly increased his surprise. To make his way to her and address her seemed the natural and direct mode of satisfying the feelings which her appearance excited.

His impetuosity was, however, checked when, advancing close upon Miss Gray and her companion, he observed that the former, though she looked at him, exhibited not the slightest token of recognition, unless he could interpret as such that she slightly touched her upper lip with her forefinger, which, if it happened otherwise than by mere accident, might be construed to mean, "Do not speak to me just now."

Hartley, adopting such an interpretation, stood stock still, blushing deeply; for he was aware that he made for the moment but a silly figure. He was the rather convinced of this when, with a voice which in the force of its accents corresponded with her commanding air, Mrs. Montreville addressed him in English, which savored slightly of a Swiss *patois*—"You have come to us very fast, sir, to say nothing at all. Are you sure you did not get your tongue stolen by de way?"

"I thought I had seen an old friend in that lady, madam," stammered Hartley, "but it seems I am mistaken."

"The good people do tell me that you are one Doctors Hartley, sir. Now, my friend and I do not know Doctors Hartley at all."

"I have not the presumption to pretend to your acquaintance, madam, but him——"

Here Menie repeated the sign in such a manner that, though it was only momentary, Hartley could not misunderstand its purpose; he therefore changed the end of his sentence, and added, "But I have only to make my bow, and ask pardon for my mistake."

He retired back accordingly among the company, unable to quit the room, and inquiring at those whom he considered as the best newsmongers for such information as—"Who is that stately-looking woman, Mr. Butler?"

"Oh, the Queen of Sheba, to be sure."

"And who is that pretty girl who sits beside her?"

"Or rather behind her," answered Butler, a military chaplain. "Faith, I cannot say. Pretty did you call her?" turning his opera-glass that way. "Yes, faith, she is pretty—very pretty. Gad, she shoots her glances as smartly from behind the old pile yonder as Teucer from behind Ajax Telamon's shield."

"But who is she, can you tell me?"

"Some fair-skinned speculation of old Montreville's, I suppose, that she has got either to toady herself or take in some of her black friends with. Is it possible you have never heard of old Mother Montreville?"

"You know I have been so long absent from Madras——"

"Well," continued Butler, "this lady is the widow of a Swiss officer in the French service, who, after the surrender of Pondicherry, went off into the interior, and commenced soldier on his own account. He got possession of a fort, under pretense of keeping it for some simple rajah or other; assembled around him a parcel of desperate vagabonds, of every color in the rainbow; occupied a considerable territory, of which he raised the duties in his own name, and declared for independence. But Hyder Naig understood no such interloping proceedings, and down he came, besieged the fort and took it, though some pretend it was betrayed to him by this very woman. Be that as it may, the poor Swiss was found dead on the ramparts. Certain it is, she received large sums of money, under pretense of paying off her troops, surrendering of hill-forts, and Heaven knows what besides. She was permitted also to retain some insignia of royalty; and, as she was wont to talk of Hyder as the Eastern Solomon, she generally became known by the title of Queen of Sheba. She leaves her court when she pleases, and has been as far as Fort St. George before now. In a word, she does pretty much as she likes. The great folks here are civil to her, though they look on her as little better than a spy. As to Hyder, it is supposed he has ensured her fidelity by borrowing the greater part of her treasures, which prevents her from daring to break with him—besides other causes that smack of scandal of another sort."

"A singular story," replied Hartley to his companion,

while his heart dwelt on the question, How it was possible that the gentle and simple Menie Gray should be in the train of such a character as this adventuress?

"But Butler has not told you the best of it," said Major Mercer, who by this time came round to finish his own story. "Your old acquaintance, Mr. Tresham, or Mr. Middlemas, or whatever else he chooses to be called, has been complimented by a report that he stood very high in the good graces of this same Boadicea. He certainly commanded some troops which she still keeps on foot, and acted at their head in the Nawaub's service, who craftily employed him in whatever could render him odious to his countrymen. The British prisoners were entrusted to his charge, and, to judge by what I felt myself, the devil might take a lesson from him in severity."

"And was he attached to, or connected with, this woman?"

"So Mrs. Rumor told us in our dungeon. Poor Jack Ward had the bastinado for celebrating their merits in a parody on the playhouse song,

> Sure such a pair were never seen,
> So aptly formed to meet by nature."

Hartley could listen no longer. The fate of Menie Gray, connected with such a man and such a woman, rushed on his fancy in the most horrid colors, and he was struggling through the throng to get to some place where he might collect his ideas, and consider what could be done for her protection, when a black attendant touched his arm, and at the same time slipped a card into his hand. It bore, "Miss Gray, Mrs. Montreville's, at the house of Ram Sing Cottah, in the Black Town." On the reverse was written with a pencil, "Eight in the morning."

This intimation of her residence implied, of course, a permission, nay, an invitation, to wait upon her at the hour specified. Hartley's heart beat at the idea of seeing her once more, and still more highly at the thought of being able to serve her. "At least," he thought, "if there is danger near her, as is much to be suspected, she shall not want a counselor, or, if necessary, a protector." Yet, at the same time, he felt the necessity of making himself better acquainted with the circumstances of her case, and the persons with whom she seemed connected. Butler and Mercer had both spoke to their disparagement; but Butler

was a little of a coxcomb, and Mercer a great deal of a gossip. While he was considering what credit was due to their testimony, he was unexpectedly encountered by a gentleman of his own profession, a military surgeon, who had had the misfortune to have been in Hyder's prison, till set at freedom by the late pacification. Mr. Esdale, for so he was called, was generally esteemed a rising man, calm, steady, and deliberate in forming his opinions. Hartley found it easy to turn the subject on the Queen of Sheba, by asking whether her Majesty was not somewhat of an adventuress.

"On my word, I cannot say," answered Esdale, smiling; "we are all upon the adventure in India, more or leas; but I do not see that the Begum Montreville is more so than the rest."

"Why, that amazonian dress and manner," said Hartley, "savor a little of the *picaresca.*"

"You must not," said Esdale, "expect a woman who has commanded soldiers, and may again, to dress and look entirely like an ordinary person; but I assure you that, even at this time of day, if she wished to marry, she might easily find a respectable match."

"Why, I heard that she had betrayed her husband's fort to Hyder."

"Ay, that is a specimen of Madras gossip. The fact is, that she defended the place long after her husband fell, and afterwards surrendered it by capitulation. Hyder, who piques himself on observing the rules of justice, would not otherwise have admitted her to such intimacy."

"Yes, I have heard," replied Hartley, "that their intimacy was rather of the closest."

"Another calumny, if you mean any scandal," answered Esdale. "Hyder is too zealous a Mohammedan to entertain a Christian mistress; and besides, to enjoy the sort of rank which is yielded to a woman in her condition, she must refrain, in appearance at least, from all correspondence in the way of gallantry. Just so they said that the poor woman had a connection with poor Middlemas of the —— regiment."

"And was that also a false report?" said Hartley, in breathless anxiety.

"On my soul, I believe it was," answered Mr. Esdale. "They were friends, Europeans in an Indian court, and therefore intimate; but I believe nothing more. By the by, though, I believe there was some quarrel between Middlemas, poor fellow, and you; yet I am sure that you will be glad to hear there is a chance of his affair being made up?"

"Indeed!" was again the only word which Hartley could utter.

"Ay, indeed," answered Esdale. "The duel is an old story now; and it must be allowed that poor Middlemas, though he was rash in that business, had provocation."

"But his desertion, his accepting of command under Hyder, his treatment of our prisoners—how can all these be passed over?" replied Hartley.

"Why, it is possible—I speak to you as a cautious man, and in confidence—that he may do us better service in Hyder's capital, or Tippoo's camp, than he could have done if serving with his own regiment. And then, for his treatment of prisoners, I am sure I can speak nothing but good of him in that particular. He was obliged to take the office, because those that serve Hyder Naig must do or die. But he told me himself—and I believe him—that he accepted the office chiefly because, while he made a great bullying at us before the black fellows, he could privately be of assistance to us. Some fools could not understand this, and answered him with abuse and lampoons; and he was obliged to to punish them, to avoid suspicion. Yes—yes, I and others can prove he was willing to be kind, if men would give him leave. I hope to thank him at Madras one day soon. All this in confidence. Good-morrow to you."

Distracted by the contradictory intelligence he had received, Hartley went next to question old Captain Capstern, the captain of the Indiaman, whom he had observed in attendance upon the Begum Montreville. On inquiring after that commander's female passengers, he heard a pretty long catalogue of names, in which that he was so much interested in did not occur. On closer inquiry, Capstern recollected that Menie Gray, a young Scotchwoman, had come out under charge of Mrs. Duffer, the master's wife. "A good, decent girl," Capstern said, "and kept the mates and guinea-pigs at a respectable distance. She came out," he believed, "to be a sort of female companion, or upper servant, in Madam Montreville's family. Snug berth enough," he concluded, "if she can find the length of the old girl's foot."

This was all that could be made of Capstern; so Hartley was compelled to remain in a state of uncertainty until the next morning, when an explanation might be expected with Menie Gray in person.

CHAPTER XI

THE exact hour assigned found Hartley at the door of the rich native merchant, who, having some reasons for wishing to oblige the Begum Montreville, had relinquished, for her accommodation and that of her numerous retinue, almost the whole of his large and sumptuous residence in the Black Town of Madras, as that district of the city is called which the natives occupy.

A domestic, at the first summons, ushered the visitor into an apartment, where he expected to be joined by Miss Gray.

The room opened on one side into a small garden or parterre, filled with the brilliant-colored flowers of Eastern climates, in the midst of which the waters of a fountain rose upwards in a sparkling jet, and fell back again into a white marble cistern.

A thousand dizzy recollections thronged on the mind of Hartley, whose early feelings towards the companion of his youth, if they had slumbered during distance and the various casualties of a busy life, were revived when he found himself placed so near her, and in circumstances which interested from their unexpected occurrence and mysterious character. A step was heard, the door opened, a female appeared ; but it was the portly form of Madame de Montreville.

"What do you please to want, sir ?" said the lady ; "that is, if you have found your tongue this morning, which you had lost yesterday."

"I proposed myself the honor of waiting upon the young person whom I saw in your Excellency's company yesterday morning," answered Hartley, with assumed respect. "I have had long the honor of being known to her in Europe, and I desire to offer my services to her in India."

"Much obliged—much obliged ; but Miss Gray is gone out, and does not return for one or two days. You may leave your commands with me."

"Pardon me, madam," replied Hartley ; "but I have some reason to hope you may be mistaken in this matter. And here comes the lady herself."

"How is this, my dear ?" said Mrs. Montreville, with un-

ruffled front, to Menie, as she entered; are you not gone out for two or three days, as I tell this gentleman? *Mais c'est égal*: it is all one thing. You will say 'How d'ye do,' and 'Good bye,' to monsieur, who is so polite as to come to ask after our healths, and as he sees us both very well, he will go away home again."

"I believe madam," said Miss Gray, with appearance of effort, "that I must speak with this gentleman for a few minutes in private, if you will permit us."

"That is to say, pe you gone? But I do not allow that: I do not like private conversation between young men and pretty young women; *cela n'est pas honnête*. It cannot be in my house."

"It may be out of it, then, madam," answered Miss Gray, not pettishly nor pertly, but with the utmost simplicity. "Mr. Hartley, will you step into that garden? And you, madam, may observe us from the window, if it be the fashion of the country to watch so closely."

As she spoke this, she stepped through a lattice-door into the garden, and with an air so simple that she seemed as if she wished to comply with her patroness's ideas of decorum, though they appeared strange to her. The Queen of Sheba, notwithstanding her natural assurance, was disconcerted by the composure of Miss Gray's manner, and left the room, apparently in displeasure. Menie turned back to the door which opened into the garden, and said, in the same manner as before, but with less nonchalance—

"I am sure I would not willingly break through the rules of a foreign country; but I cannot refuse myself the pleasure of speaking to so old a friend, if, indeed," she added, pausing to look at Hartley, who was much embarrassed, "it be as much pleasure to Mr. Hartley as it is to me."

"It would have been," said Hartley, scarce knowing what he said—"It must be a pleasure to me in every circumstance. But this extraordinary meeting—but your father——"

Menie Gray's handkerchief was at her eyes. "He is gone, Mr. Hartley. After he was left unassisted, his toilsome business became too much for him; he caught a cold, which hung about him, as you know he was the last to attend to his own complaints, till it assumed a dangerous, and finally, a fatal character. I distress you, Mr. Hartley, but it becomes you well to be affected. My father loved you dearly."

"Oh, Miss Gray!" said Hartley, "it should not have been thus with my excellent friend at the close of his useful and virtuous life. Alas, wherefore—the question bursts from

me involuntarily—wherefore could you not have complied with his wishes? Wherefore——"

"Do not ask me," said she, stopping the question which was on his lips; "we are not the formers of our own destiny. It is painful to talk on such a subject; but for once, and forever, let me tell you that I should have done Mr. Hartley wrong if, even to secure his assistance to my father, I had accepted his hand, while my wayward affections did not accompany the act."

"But wherefore do I see you here, Menie? Forgive me, Miss Gray, my tongue as well as my heart turns back to long-forgotten scenes. But why here? Why with this woman?"

"She is not, indeed, everything that I expected," answered Menie; "but I must not be prejudiced by foreign manners, after the step I have taken. She is, besides, attentive, and generous in her way, and I shall soon"—she paused a moment, and then added, "be under better protection."

"That of Richard Middlemas?" said Hartley, with faltering voice.

"I ought not, perhaps, to answer the question," said Menie; "but I am a bad dissembler, and those whom I trust, I trust entirely. You have guessed right, Mr. Hartley," she added, coloring a good deal, "I have come hither to unite my fate to that of your old comrade."

"It is, then, just as I feared!" exclaimed Hartley.

"And why should Mr. Hartley fear?" said Menie Gray. "I used to think you too generous; surely the quarrel which occurred long since ought not to perpetuate suspicion and resentment."

"At least, if the feeling of resentment remained in my own bosom, it would be the last I should intrude upon you, Miss Gray," answered Hartley. "But it is for you and for you alone, that I am watchful. This persou—this gentleman whom you mean to entrust with your happiness—do you know where he is, and in what service?"

"I know both, more distinctly perhaps than Mr. Hartley can do. Mr. Middlemas has erred greatly, and has been severely punished. But it was not in the time of his exile and sorrow that she who has plighted her faith to him should, with the flattering world, turn her back upon him. Besides, you have, doubtless, not heard of his hopes of being restored to his country and his rank?"

"I have," answered Hartley, thrown off his guard; "but I see not how he can deserve it, otherwise than by becoming

a traitor to his new master, and thus rendering himself even more unworthy of confidence than I hold him to be at this moment."

"It is well that he hears you not," answered Menie Gray, resenting, with natural feeling, the imputation on her lover. Then instantly softening her tone, she added, "My voice ought not to aggravate, but to soothe, your quarrel. Mr. Hartley, I plight my word to you that you do Richard wrong."

She said these words with affecting calmness, suppressing all appearance of that displeasure of which she was evidently sensible, upon this depreciation of a beloved object.

Hartley compelled himself to answer in the same strain.

"Miss Gray," he said, "your actions and motives will always be those of an angel; but let me entreat you to view this most important matter with the eyes of worldly wisdom and prudence. Have you well weighed the risks attending the course which you are taking in favor of a man, who—nay, I will not again offend you—who may, I hope, deserve your favor?"

"When I wished to see you in this manner, Mr. Hartley, and declined a communication in public, where we could have had less freedom of conversation, it was with the view of telling you everything. Some pain I thought old recollections might give, but I trusted it would be momentary; and, as I desire to retain your friendship, it is proper I should show that I still deserve it. I must then first tell you my situation after my father's death. In the world's opinion, we were always poor, you know; but in the proper sense I had not known what real poverty was until I was placed in dependence upon a distant relation of my poor father, who made our relationship a reason for casting upon me all the drudgery of her household, while she would not allow that it gave me a claim to countenance, kindness, or anything but the relief of my most pressing wants. In these circumstances I received from Mr. Middlemas a letter, in which he related his fatal duel and its consequence. He had not dared to write to me to share his misery. Now, when he was in a lucrative situation, under the patronage of a powerful prince, whose wisdom knew how to prize and protect such Europeans as entered his service—now, when he had every prospect of rendering our government such essential service by his interest with Hyder Ali, and might eventually nourish hopes of being permitted to return and stand his trial for the death of his commanding officer—

now, he pressed me to come to India, and share his reviving fortunes, by accomplishing the engagement into which we had long ago entered. A considerable sum of money accompanied this letter. Mrs. Duffer was pointed out as a respectable woman, who would protect me during the passage. Mrs. Montreville, a lady of rank, having large possessions and high interest in the Mysore, would receive me on my arrival at Fort St. George, and conduct me safely to the dominions of Hyder. It was further recommended that, considering the peculiar situation of Mr. Middlemas, his name should be concealed in the transaction, and that the ostensible cause of my voyage should be to fill an office in that lady's family. What was I to do? My duty to my poor father was ended, and my other friends considered the proposal as too advantageous to be rejected. The references given, the sum of money lodged, were considered as putting all scruples out of the question, and my immediate protectress and kinswoman was so earnest that I should accept of the offer made me, as to intimate that she would not encourage me to stand in my own light by continuing to give me shelter and food—she gave me little more—if I was foolish enough to refuse compliance."

"Sordid wretch," said Hartley, "how little did she deserve such a charge!"

"Let me speak a proud word, Mr. Hartley, and then you will not perhaps blame my relations so much. All their persuasions, and even their threats, would have failed in inducing me to take a step which has an appearance, at least, to which I found it difficult to reconcile myself. But I had loved Middlemas—I love him still, why should I deny it?—and I have not hesitated to trust him. Had it not been for the small still voice which reminded me of my engagements, I had maintained more stubbornly the pride of womanhood, and, as you would perhaps have recommended, I might have expected, at least, that my lover should have come to Britain in person, and might have had the vanity to think," she added, smiling faintly, "that, if I were worth having, I was worth fetching."

"Yet now—even now," answered Hartley, "be just to yourself while you are generous to your lover. Nay, do not look angrily, but hear me. I doubt the propriety of your being under the charge of this unsexed woman, who can no longer be termed a European. I have interest enough with females of the highest rank in the settlement—this climate is that of generosity and hospitality—there is not one of

them who, knowing your character and history, will not desire to have you in her society, and under her protection, until your lover shall be able to vindicate his title to your hand in the face of the world. I myself will be no cause of suspicion to him, or of inconvenience to you, Menie. Let me but have your consent to the arrangement I propose, and the same moment that sees you under honorable and unsuspected protection, I will leave Madras, not to return till your destiny is in one way or other permanently fixed."

"No, Hartley," said Miss Gray. "It may—it must be, friendly in you thus to advise me; but it would be most base in me to advance my own affairs at the expense of your prospects. Besides, what would this be but taking the chance of contingencies, with the view of sharing poor Middlemas's fortunes should they prove prosperous, and casting him off should they be otherwise? Tell me only, do you, of your own positive knowledge, aver that you consider this woman as an unworthy and unfit protectress for so young a person as I am?"

"Of my own knowledge I can say nothing—nay, I must own that reports differ even concerning Mrs. Montreville's character. But surely the mere suspicion——"

"The mere suspicion, Mr. Hartley, can have no weight with me, considering that I can oppose to it the testimony of the man with whom I am willing to share my future fortunes. You acknowledge the question is but doubtful, and should not the assertion of him of whom I think so highly decide my belief in a doubtful matter? What, indeed, must he be, should this Madame Montreville be other than he represented her?"

"What must he be, indeed!" thought Hartley internally, but his lips uttered not the words. He looked down in a deep reverie, and at length started from it at the words of Miss Gray.

"It is time to remind you, Mr. Hartley, that we must needs part. God bless and preserve you."

"And you, dearest Menie," exclaimed Hartley, as he sunk on one knee, and pressed to his lips the hand which she held out to him, "God bless you!—you must deserve blessing. God protect you!—you must need protection. Oh, should things prove different from what you hope, send for me instantly, and if man can aid you, Adam Hartley will."

He placed in her hand a card containing his address. He then rushed from the apartment [garden]. In the hall he met the lady of the mansion, who made him a haughty rev-

erence in token of adieu, while a native servant of the upper class, by whom she was attended, made a low and reverential salam.

Hartley hastened from the Black Town, more satisfied than before that some deceit was about to be practised towards Menie Gray, more determined than ever to exert himself for her preservation; yet more completely perplexed, when he began to consider the doubtful character of the danger to which she might be exposed, and the scanty means of protection which he had to oppose to it.

CHAPTER XII

As Hartley left the apartment [garden] in the house of Ram Sing Cottah by one mode of exit, Miss Gray retired by another to an apartment destined for her private use. She, too, had reason for secret and anxious reflection, since all her love for Middlemas, and her full confidence in his honor, could not entirely conquer her doubts concerning the character of the person whom he had chosen for her temporary protectoress. And yet she could not rest these doubts upon anything distinctly conclusive : it was rather a dislike of her patroness's general manners, and a disgust at her masculine notions and expressions, that displeased her than anything else.

Meantime, Madame Montreville, followed by her black domestic, entered the apartment where Hartley and Menie had just parted. It appeared from the conversation which follows that they had from some place of concealment overheard the dialogue we have narrated in the former chapter.

"It is good luck, Sadoc," said the lady, "that there is in this world the great fool."

"And the great villain," answered Sadoc, in good English, but in a most sullen tone.

"This woman, now," continued the lady, "is what in Frangistan you call an angel."

"Ay, and I have seen those in Hindostan you may well call devil."

"I am sure that this—how you call him—Hartley, is a meddling devil. For what has he to do? She will not have any of him. What is his business who has her? I wish we were well up the Ghauts again, my dear Sadoc."

"For my part," answered the slave, "I am half determined never to ascend the Ghauts more. Hark you, Adela, I begin to sicken of the plan we have laid. This creature's confiding purity—call her angel or woman, as you will—makes my practises appear too vile, even in my own eyes. I feel myself unfit to be your companion farther in the daring paths which you pursue. Let us part, and part friends."

"Amen, coward. But the woman remains with me," answered the Queen of Sheba.*

"With thee!" replied the seeming black—"never. No, Adela. She is under the shadow of the British flag, and she shall experience its protection."

"Yes, and what protection will it afford to you yourself?" retorted the amazon. "What if I should clap my hands, and command a score of my black servants to bind you like a sheep, and then send word to the Governor of the Presidency that one Richard Middlemas, who had been guilty of mutiny murder, desertion, and serving of the enemy against his countrymen, is here, at Ram Sing Cottah's house, in the disguise of a black servant?" Middlemas covered his face with his hands, while Madame Montreville proceeded to load him with reproaches. "Yes," she said, "slave, and son of a slave! Since you wear the dress of my household, you shall obey me as fully as the rest of them, otherwise—whips, fetters—the scaffold, renegade—the gallows, murderer! Dost thou dare to reflect on the abyss of misery from which I raised thee, to share my wealth and my affections? Dost thou not remember that the picture of this pale, cold, unimpassioned girl was then so indifferent to thee that thou didst sacrifice it as a tribute due to the benevolence of her who believed thee, to the affection of her who, wretch as thou art, condescended to love thee?"

"Yes, fell woman," answered Middlemas, "but was it I who encouraged the young tyrant's outrageous passion for a portrait, or who formed the abominable plan of placing the original within his power?"

"No; for to do so required brain and wit. But it was thine, flimsy villain, to execute the device which a bolder genius planned: it was thine to entice the woman to this foreign shore, under pretense of a love which, on thy part, cold-blooded miscreant, never had existed."

"Peace, screech-owl!" answered Middlemas, "nor drive me to such madness as may lead me to forget thou art a woman."

"A woman, dastard! Is this thy pretext for sparing me? What, then, art thou, who tremblest at a woman's looks, a woman's words? I am a woman, renegade, but one who wears a dagger, and despises alike thy strength and thy courage. I am a woman who has looked on more dying men

* In order to maintain uninjured the tone of passion throughout this dialogue, it has been judged expedient to discard, in the language of the Begum, the *patois* of Madame Montreville.

that thou hast killed deer and antelopes. Thou must traffic for greatness? Thou hast thrust thyself like a five years' child into the rough sports of men, and wilt only be borne down and crushed for thy pains. Thou wilt be a double traitor, forsooth: betray thy betrothed to the prince, in order to obtain the means of betraying the prince to the English, and thus gain thy pardon from thy countrymen. But me thou shalt not betray. I will not be made the tool of thy ambition. I will not give thee the aid of my treasures and my soldiers, to be sacrificed at last to this Northern icicle. No, I will watch thee as the fiend watches the wizard. Show but a symptom of betraying me while we are here, and I denounce thee to the English, who might pardon the successful villain, but not him who can only offer prayers for his life in place of useful services. Let me see thee flinch when we are beyond the Ghauts, and the Nawaub shall know thy intrigues with the Nizam and the Mahrattas, and thy resolution to deliver up Bangalore to the English, when the imprudence of Tippoo shall have made thee *killedar*. Go where thou wilt, slave, thou shalt find me thy mistress."

"And a fair, though an unkind, one," said the counterfeit Sadoc, suddenly changing his tone to an affectation of tenderness. "It is true I pity this unhappy woman—true I would save her if I could; but most unjust to suppose I would in any circumstances prefer her to my *nourjehan*, my light of the world, my *mootee mahul*, my pearl of the palace——"

"All false coin and empty compliment," said the Begum. "Let me hear, in two brief words, that you leave this woman to my disposal."

"But not to be interred alive under your seat, like the Circassian of whom you were jealous," said Middlemas, shuddering.

"No, fool; her lot shall not be worse than that of being the favorite of a prince. Hast thou, fugitive and criminal as thou art, a better fate to offer her?"

"But," replied Middlemas, blushing even through his base disguise at the consciousness of his abject conduct, "I will have no force on her inclinations."

"Such truce she shall have as the laws of the zenana allow," replied the female tyrant. "A week is long enough for her to determine whether she will be the willing mistress of a princely and generous lover."

"Ay," said Richard, "and before that week expires——" He stopped short.

"What will happen before the week expires?" said the Begum Montreville.

"No matter—nothing of consequence. I leave the woman's fate with you."

"'Tis well; we march to-night on our return, so soon as the moon rises. Give orders to our retinue."

"To hear is to obey," replied the seeming slave, and left the apartment.

The eyes of the Begum remained fixed on the door through which he had passed. "Villain—double-dyed villain!" she said, "I see thy drift: thou wouldst betray Tippoo, in policy alike and in love. But me thou canst not betray. Ho, there who waits? Let a trusty messenger be ready to set off instantly with letters, which I will presently make ready. His departure must be a secret to every one. And now shall this pale phantom soon know her destiny, and learn what it is to have rivaled Adela Montreville."

While the amazonian princess meditated plans of vengeance against her innocent rival and the guilty lover, the latter plotted as deeply for his own purpose. He had waited until such brief twilight as India enjoys rendered his disguise complete, then set out in haste for the part of Madras inhabited by the Europeans, or, as it is termed, Fort St. George.

"I will save her yet," he said: "ere Tippoo can seize his prize, we will raise around his ears a storm which would drive the God of War from the arms of the Goddess of Beauty. The trap shall close its fangs upon this Indian tiger ere he has time to devour the bait which enticed him into the snare."

While Middlemas cherished these hopes, he approached the residency. The sentinel on duty stopped him, as of course; but he was in possession of the countersign, and entered without opposition. He rounded the building in which the President of the Council resided—an able and active, but unconscientious, man, who neither in his own affairs nor in those of the Company was supposed to embarrass himself much about the means which he used to attain his object. A tap at a small postern-gate was answered by a black slave, who admitted Middlemas to that necessary appurtenance of every government, a back stair, which, in its turn, conducted him to the office of the Bramin Paupiah, the *dubash*, or steward, of the great man, and by whose means chiefly he communicated with the native courts, and carried on many mysterious intrigues, which he did not communicate to his brethren at the council-board.

It is perhaps justice to the guilty and unhappy Middlemas to suppose that, if the agency of the British officer had been employed, he might have been induced to throw himself on his mercy, might have explained the whole of his nefarious bargain with Tippoo, and, renouncing his guilty projects of ambition, might have turned his whole thoughts upon saving Menie Gray, ere she was transported beyond the reach of British protection. But the thin, dusky form which stood before him, wrapped in robes of muslin embroidered with gold, was that of Paupiah, known as a master-counselor of dark projects, an Oriental Michiavel, whose premature wrinkles were the result of many an intrigue, in which the existence of the poor, the happiness of the rich, the honor of men, and the chastity of women had been sacrificed without scruple to attain some private or political advantage. He did not even inquire by what means the renegade Briton proposed to acquire that influence with Tippoo which might enable him to betray him : he only desired to be assured that the fact was real.

"You speak at the risk of your head if you deceive Paupiah, or make Paupiah the means of deceiving his master. I know, so does all Madras, that the Nawaub has placed his young son, Tippoo, as vice-regent of his newly-conquered territory of Bangalore, which Hyder hath lately added to his dominions. But that Tippoo should bestow the government of that important place on an apostate Feringi seems more doubtful."

"Tippoo is young," answered Middlemas, "and to youth the temptation of the passions is what a lily on the surface of the lake is to childhood : they will risk life to reach it, though, when obtained, it is of little value. Tippoo has the cunning of his father and his military talents, but the lacks his cautious wisdom."

"Thou speakest truth ; but when thou art governor of Bangalore, hast thou forces to hold the place till thou art relieved by the Mahrattas or by the British ?"

"Doubt it not : the soldiers of the Begum Mootee Mahul, whom the Europeans call Montreville, are less hers than mine. I am myself her *bukshee* (general), and her sirdars are at my devotion. With these I could keep Bangalore for two months, and the British army may be before it in a week. What do you risk by advancing General Smith's army nearer to the frontier ?"

"We risk a settled peace with Hyder," answered Paupiah, "for which he has made advantageous offers. Yet I say not

but thy plan may be most advantageous. Thou sayest Tippoo's treasures are in the fort ?"

"His treasures and his zenana ; I may even be able to secure his person."

"That were a goodly pledge," answered the Hindoo minister.

"And you consent that the treasures shall be divided to the last rupee, as in this scroll ?"

"The share of Paupiah's master is too small," said the Bramin ; "and the name of Paupiah is unnoticed."

"The share of the Begum may be divided between Paupiah and his master," answered Middlemas.

"But the Begum will expect her proportion," replied Paupiah.

"Let me alone to deal with her," said Middlemas. "Before the blow is struck, she shall not know of our private treaty, and afterwards her disappointment will be of little consequence. And now, remember my stipulations—my rank to be restored, my full pardon to be granted."

"Ay," replied Paupiah, cautiously, "should you succeed. But were you to betray what has here passed, I will find the dagger of a lootie which shall reach thee, wert thou sheltered under the folds of the Nawaub's garment. In the mean time, take this missive, and when you are in possession of Bangalore despatch it to General Smith, whose division shall have orders to approach as near the frontiers of Mysore as may be, without causing suspicion."

Thus parted this worthy pair, Paupiah to report to his principal the progress of these dark machinations, Middlemas to join the Begum on her return to the Mysore. The gold and diamonds of Tippoo, the importance which he was about to acquire, the ridding himself at once of the capricious authority of the irritable Tippoo and the troublesome claims of the Begum, were such agreeable subjects of contemplation, that he scarcely thought of the fate of his European victim, unless to salve his conscience with the hope that the sole injury she could sustain might be the alarm of a few days, during the course of which he would acquire the means of delivering her from the tyrant in whose zenana she was to remain a temporary prisoner. He resolved, at the same time, to abstain from seeing her till the moment he could afford her protection, justly considering the danger which his whole plan might incur if he again awakened the jealousy of the Begum. This, he trusted, was now asleep ; and, in the course of their return to Tippoo's camp, near

Bangalore, it was his study to soothe this ambitious and crafty female by blandishments, intermingled with the more splendid prospects of wealth and power to be opened to them both, as he pretended, by the success of his present enterprise.

CHAPTER XIII

It appears that the jealous and tyrannical Begum did not long suspend her purpose of agonizing her rival by acquainting her with her intended fate. By prayers or rewards, Menie Gray prevailed on a servant of Ram Sing Cottah to deliver to Hartley the following distracted note :—

"All is true your fears foretold. He has delivered me up to a cruel woman, who threatens to sell me to the tyrant Tippoo. Save me if you can ; if you have not pity, or cannot give me aid, there is none left upon earth.—M. G."

The haste with which Dr. Hartley sped to the Fort, and demanded an audience of the governor, was defeated by the delays interposed by Paupiah.

It did not suit the plans of this artful Hindoo that any interruption should be opposed to the departure of the Begum and her favorite, considering how much the plans of the last corresponded with his own. He affected incredulity on the charge when Hartley complained of an Englishwoman being detained in the train of the Begum against her consent, treated the complaint of Miss Gray as the result of some female quarrel unworthy of particular attention, and when at length he took some steps for examining further into the matter, he contrived they should be so tardy, that the Begum and her retinue were far beyond the reach of interruption.

Hartley let his indignation betray him into reproaches against Paupiah, in which his principal was not spared. This only served to give the impassible Bramin a pretext for excluding him from the residency, with a hint that, if his language continued to be of such an imprudent character, he might expect to be removed from Madras, and stationed at some hill fort or village among the mountains, where his medical knowledge would find full exercise in protecting himself and others from the unhealthiness of the climate.

As he retired, bursting with ineffectual indignation, Esdale was the first person whom Hartley chanced to meet

with, and to him, stung with impatience, he communicated what he termed the infamous conduct of the governor's dubash, connived at, as he had but too much reason to suppose, by the governor himself; exclaiming against the want of spirit which they betrayed, in abandoning a British subject to the fraud of renegades and the force of a tyrant.

Esdale listened with that sort of anxiety which prudent men betray when they feel themselves like to be drawn into trouble by the discourse of an imprudent friend.

"If you desire to be personally righted in this matter," said he at length, "you must apply to Leadenhall Street, where I suspect—betwixt ourselves—complaints are accumulating fast, both against Paupiah and his master."

"I care for neither of them," said Hartley; "I need no personal redress—I desire none. I only want succor for Menie Gray."

"In that case," said Esdale, "you have only one resource: you must apply to Hyder himself——"

"To Hyder—to the usurper—the tyrant?"

"Yes, to this usurper and tyrant," answered Esdale, "you must be contented to apply. His pride is, to be thought a strict administrator of justice; and perhaps he may on this, as on other occasions, choose to display himself in the light of an impartial magistrate."

"Then I go to demand justice at his footstool," said Hartley.

"Not so fast, my dear Hartley," answered his friend; "first consider the risk. Hyder is just by reflection, and perhaps from political considerations; but by temperament his blood is as unruly as ever beat under a black skin, and if you do not find him in the vein of judging, he is likely enough to be in that of killing. Stakes and bowstrings are as frequently in his head as the adjustment of the scales of justice."

"No matter, I will instantly present myself at his *durbar*. The governor cannot for very shame refuse me letters of credence."

"Never think of asking them," said his more experienced friend; "it would cost Paupiah little to have them so worded as to induce Hyder to rid our sable dubash at once and forever of the sturdy, free-spoken Dr. Adam Hartley. A *vakeel*, or messenger of government, sets out to-morrow for Seringapatam; contrive to join him on the road, his passport will protect you both. Do you know none of the chiefs about Hyder's person?"

"None, excepting his late emissary to this place, Barak el Hadgi," answered Hartley.

"His support," said Esdale, "although only a fakir, may be as effectual as that of persons of more essential consequence. And, to say the truth, where the caprice of a despot is the question in debate, there is no knowing upon what it is best to reckon. Take my advice, my dear Hartley, leave this poor girl to her fate. After all, by placing yourself in an attitude of endeavoring to save her, it is a hundred to one that you only ensure your own destruction."

Hartley shook his head, and bade Esdale hastily farewell; leaving him in the happy and self-applauding state of mind proper to one who has given the best advice possible to a friend, and may conscientiously wash his hands of all consequences.

Having furnished himself with money, and with the attendance of three trusty native servants, mounted like himself on Arab horses, and carrying with them no tent, and very little baggage, the anxious Hartley lost not a moment in taking the road to Mysore, endeavoring, in the meantime, by recollecting every story he had ever heard of Hyder's justice and forbearance, to assure himself that he should find the Nawaub disposed to protect a helpless female, even against the future heir of his empire.

Before he crossed the Madras territory, he overtook the vakeel, or messenger of the British government, of whom Esdale had spoken. This man, accustomed for a sum of money to permit adventurous European traders who desired to visit Hyder's capital to share his protection, passport, and escort, was not disposed to refuse the same good office to a gentleman of credit at Madras; and, propitiated by an additional gratuity, undertook to travel as speedily as possible. It was a journey which was not prosecuted without much fatigue and considerable danger, as they had to traverse a country frequently exposed to all the evils of war, more especially when they approached the Ghauts, those tremendous mountain-passes which descend from the tableland of Mysore, and through which the mighty streams that arise in the center of the Indian peninsula find their way to the ocean.

The sun had set ere the party reached the foot of one of those perilous passes, up which lay the road to Seringapatam. A narrow path, which in summer resembled an empty water-course, winding upwards among immense rocks and precipices, was at one time completely overshadowed by dark

groves of teak-trees, and at another found its way beside impenetrable jungles, the habitation of jackals and tigers.

By means of this unsocial path the travelers threaded their way in silence—Hartley, whose impatience kept him before the vakeel, eagerly inquiring when the moon would enlighten the darkness, which, after the sun's disappearance, closed fast around them. He was answered by the natives according to their usual mode of expression, that the moon was in her dark side, and that he was not to hope to behold her bursting through a cloud to illuminate the thickets and strata of black and slaty rocks amongst which they were winding. Hartley had therefore no resource save to keep his eye steadily fixed on the lighted match of the *sowar*, or horseman, who rode before him, which, for sufficient reasons, was always kept in readiness to be applied to the priming of the matchlock. The vidette, on his part, kept a watchful eye on the *dowrah*, a guide supplied at the last village, who, having got more than half-way from his own house, was much to be suspected of meditating how to escape the trouble of going further. The dowrah, on the other hand, conscious of the lighted match and loaded gun behind him, hallooed from time to time to show that he was on his duty, and to accelerate the march of the travelers. His cries were answered by an occasional ejaculation of "Ulla!" from the black soldiers, who closed the rear, and who were meditating on former adventures, the plundering of a *kaffila* (party of traveling merchants), or some such exploit, or perhaps reflecting that a tiger, in the neighboring jungle, might be watching patiently for the last of the party, in order to spring upon him, according to his usual practise.

The sun, which appeared almost as suddenly as it had left them, served to light the travelers in the remainder of the ascent, and called forth from the Mohammedans belonging to the party the morning prayer of *Allah ackbar*, which resounded in long notes among the rocks and ravines, and they continued with better advantage their forced march until the pass opened upon a boundless extent of jungle, with a single high mud fort rising through the midst of it. Upon this plain rapine and war had suspended the labors of industry, and the rich vegetation of the soil had in a few years converted a fertile champaign country into an almost impenetrable thicket. Accordingly, the banks of a small *nullah*, or brook, were covered with the footmarks of tigers and other animals of prey.

Here the travelers stopped to drink, and to refresh them-

selves and their horses ; and it was near this spot that Hartley saw a sight which forced him to compare the subject which engrossed his own thoughts with the distress that had afflicted another.

At a spot not far distant from the brook, the guide called their attention to a most wretched-looking man, overgrown with hair, who was seated on the skin of a tiger. His body was covered with mud and ashes, his skin sunburned, his dress a few wretched tatters. He appeared not to observe the approach of the strangers, neither moving nor speaking a word, but remaining with his eyes fixed on a small and rude tomb, formed of the black slate-stones which lay around, and exhibiting a small recess for a lamp. As they approached the man, and placed before him a rupee or two and some rice, they observed that a tiger's skull and bones lay beside him, with a saber almost consumed by rust.

While they gazed on this miserable object, the guide acquainted them with his tragical history. Sadhu Sing had been a *sipahee,* or soldier, and freebooter of course, the native and the pride of a half-ruined village which they had passed on the preceding day. He was betrothed to the daughter of a sipahee, who served in the mud fort which they saw at a distance rising above the jungle. In due time, Sadhu, with his friends, came for the purpose of the marriage, and to bring home the bride. She was mounted on a *tatoo,* a small horse belonging to the country, and Sadhu and his friends preceded her on foot in all their joy and pride. As they approached the nullah near which the travelers were resting, there was heard a dreadrul roar, accompanied by a shriek of agony. Sadhu Sing, who instantly turned, saw no trace of his bride, save that her horse ran wild in one direction, whilst in the other the long grass and reeds of the jungle were moving like the ripple of the ocean, when distorted by the course of a shark holding its way near the surface. Sadhu drew his saber and rushed forward in that direction ; the rest of the party remained motionless until roused by a short roar of agony. They then plunged into the jungle with their drawn weapons, where they speedily found Sadhu Sing holding in his arms the lifeless corpse of his bride, while a little farther lay the body of the tiger, slain by such a blow over the neck as desperation itself could alone have discharged. The brideless bridegroom would permit none to interfere with his sorrow. He dug a grave for his Mora, and erected over it the rude tomb they saw, and never afterwards left the spot. The beasts of prey

themselves seemed to respect or dread the extremity of his sorrow. His friends brought him food and water from the nullah ; but he neither smiled nor showed any mark of acknowledgment unless when they brought him flowers to deck the grave of Mora. Four or five years, according to the guide, had passed away, and there Sadhu Sing still remained among the trophies of his grief and his vengeance, exhibiting all the symptoms of advanced age, though still in the prime of youth.

The tale hastened the travelers from their resting-place ; the vakeel because it reminded him of the dangers of the jungle, and Hartley because it coincided too well with the probable fate of his beloved, almost within the grasp of a more formidable tiger than that whose skeleton lay beside Sadhu Sing.

It was at the mud fort already mentioned that the travelers received the first accounts of the progress of the Begum and her party, by a *peon*, or foot-soldier, who had been in their company, but was now on his return to the coast. "They had traveled," he said, "with great speed, until they accended the Ghauts, where they were joined by a party of the Begum's own forces ; and he and others, who had been brought from Madras as a temporary escort, were paid and dismissed to their homes. After this, he understood, it was the purpose of the Begum Mootee Mahul to proceed by slow marches and frequent halts to Bangalore, the vicinity of which place she did not desire to reach until Prince Tippoo, with whom she desired an interview, should have returned from an expedition towards Vandicotta, in which he had lately been engaged."

From the result of his anxious inquiries, Hartley had reason to hope that, though Seringapatam was seventy-five miles more to the eastward [westward] than Bangalore, yet, by using diligence, he might have time to throw himself at the feet of Hyder and beseech his interposition before the meeting betwixt Tippoo and the Begum should decide the fate of Menie Gray. On the other hand, he trembled as the peon told him that the Begum's bukshee, or general, who had traveled to Madras with her in disguise, had now assumed the dress and character belonging to his rank, and it was expected he was to be honored by the Mohammedan prince with some high office of dignity. With still deeper anxiety, he learned that a palanquin, watched with sedulous care by the slaves of Oriental jealousy, contained, it was whispered, a Feringi, or Frankish woman, beautiful as an houri, who had been brought from England by the Begum as a present

to Tippoo. The deed of villainy was therefore in full train to be accomplished ; it remained to see whether, by diligence on Hartley's side, its course could be interrupted.

When this eager vindicator of betrayed innocence arrived in the capital of Hyder, it may be believed that he consumed no time in viewing the temple of the celebrated Vishnoo, or in surveying the splendid gardens called Loll-bang, which were the monument of Hyder's magnificence, and now hold his mortal remains. On the contrary, he was no sooner arrived in the city than he hastened to the principal mosque, having no doubt that he was there most likely to learn some tidings of Barak el Hadgi. He approached, accordingly, the sacred spot, and as to enter it would have cost a Feringi his life, he employed the agency of a devout Mussulman to obtain information concerning the person whom he sought. He was not long in learning that the fakir Barak was within the mosque, as he had anticipated, busied with his holy office of reading passages from the Koran and its most approved commentators. To interrupt him in his devout task was impossible, and it was only by a high bribe that he could prevail on the same Moslem whom he had before employed to slip into the sleeve of the holy man's robe a paper containing his name and that of the khan in which the vakeel had taken up his residence. The agent brought back for answer, that the fakir, immersed, as was to be expected, in the holy service which he was in the act of discharging, had paid no visible attention to the symbol of intimation which the Feringi *sahib* (European gentleman) had sent to him. Distracted with the loss of time, of which each moment was precious, Hartley next endeavored to prevail on the Mussulman to interrupt the fakir's devotions with a verbal message ; but the man was indignant at the very proposal.

"Dog of a Christian !" he said, "what art thou and thy whole generation, that Barak el Hadgi should lose a divine thought for the sake of an infidel like thee ?"

Exasperated beyond self-possession, the unfortunate Hartley was now about to intrude upon the precincts of the mosque in person, in hopes of interrupting the formal prolonged recitation which issued from its recesses, when an old man laid his hand on his shoulder, and prevented him from a rashness which might have cost him his life, saying at the same time, "You are a *sahib Angrezię* (English gentleman) ; I have been a *telinga* (a private soldier) in the Company's service, and have eaten their salt. I will do your errand for you to the fakir Barak el Hadgi."

So saying, he entered the mosque, and presently returned with the fakir's answer, in these enigmatical words—"He who would see the sun rise must watch till the dawn."

With this poor subject of consolation, Hartley retired to his inn, to meditate on the futility of the professions of the natives, and to devise some other mode of finding access to Hyder than that which he had hitherto trusted to. On this point, however, he lost all hope, being informed by his late fellow-traveler, whom he found at the khan, that the Nawaub was absent from the city on a secret expedition, which might detain him for two or three days. This was the answer which the vakeel himself had received from the *dewan*, with a farther intimation that be must hold himself ready, when he was required, to deliver his credentials to Prince Tippoo, instead of the Nawaub, his business being referred to the former in a way not very promising for the success of his mission.

Hartley was now nearly thrown into despair. He applied to more than one officer supposed to have credit with the Nawaub, but the slightest hint of the nature of his business seemed to strike all with terror. Not one of the persons he applied to would engage in the affair, or even consent to give it a hearing ; and the dewan plainly told him, that to engage in opposition to Prince Tippoo's wishes was the ready way to destruction, and exhorted him to return to the coast. Driven almost to destraction by his various failures, Hartley betook himself in the evening to the khan. The call of the muezzins thundering from the minarets had invited the faithful to prayers, when a black servant, about fifteen years old, stood before Hartley, and pronounced these words, deliberately, and twice over—"Thus says Barak el Hadgi, the watcher in the mosque—He that would see the sun rise, let him turn towards the east." He then left the caravanserai ; and it may be well supposed that Hartley, starting from the carpet on which he had lain down to repose himself, followed his youthful guide with renewed vigor and palpitating hope.

CHAPTER XIV

'Twas the hour when rites unholy
  Call'd each paynim voice to prayer,
And the star that faded slowly
  Left to dews the freshen'd air.

Day his sultry fires had wasted,
  Calm and cool the moonbeams shone;
To the vizier's lofty palace
  One bold Christian came alone.
THOMAS CAMPBEEL. *Quoted from memory.**

THE twilight darkened into night so fast, that it was only by his white dress that Hartley could discern his guide, as he tripped along the splendid bazaar of the city. But the obscurity was so far favorable, that it prevented the inconvenient attention which the natives might otherwise have bestowed upon the European in his native dress, a sight at that time very rare in Seringapatam.

The various turnings and windings through which he was conducted ended at a small door in a wall, which, from the branches that hung over it, seemed to surround a garden or grove.

The postern opened on a tap from his guide, and the slave having entered, Hartley prepared to follow, but stepped back as a gigantic African brandished at his head a scimitar three fingers broad. The young slave touched his countryman with a rod which he held in his hand, and it seemed as if the touch disabled the giant, whose arm and weapon sunk instantly. Hartley entered without farther opposition, and was now in a grove of mango-trees, through which an infant moon was twinkling faintly amid the murmur of waters, the sweet song of the nightingale, and the odors of the rose, yellow jasmine, orange and citron flowers, and Persian narcissus. Huge domes and arches, which were seen imperfectly in the quivering light, seemed to intimate the neighborhood of some sacred edifice, where the fakir had doubtless taken up his residence.

* It is only in the last two lines that the Author has made a serious alteration on Campbell. (*Laing*).

Hartley pressed on with as much haste as he could, and entered a side door and narrow vaulted passage, at the end of which was another door. Here his guide stopped, but pointed and made indications that the European should enter. Hartley did so, and found himself in a small cell, such as we have formerly described, wherein sat Barak el Hadgi, with another fakir, who, to judge from the extreme dignity of a white beard, which ascended up to his eyes on each side, must be a man of great sanctity, as well as importance.

Hartley pronounced the usual salutation of "*Salam alaikum*" in the most modest and deferential tone; but his former friend was so far from responding in their former strain of intimacy, that, having consulted the eye of his older companion, he barely pointed to a third carpet, upon which the stranger seated himself cross-legged after the country fashion, and a profound silence prevailed for the space of several minutes. Hartley knew the Oriental customs too well to endanger the success of his suit by precipitation. He waited an intimation to speak. At length it came, and from Barak.

"When the pilgrim Barak," he said, "dwelt at Madras he had eyes and a tongue; but now he is guided by those of his father, the holy Scheik Hali ben Khaledoun, the superior of his convent."

This extreme humility Hartley thought inconsistent with the affectation of possessing superior influence which Barak had shown while at the presidency; but exaggeration of their own consequence is a foible common to all who find themselves in a land of strangers. Addressing the senior fakir, therefore, he told him in as few words as possible the villainous plot which was laid to betray Menie Gray into the hands of the Prince Tippoo. He made his suit for the reverend father's intercession with the prince himself, and with his father the Nawaub, in the most persuasive terms. The fakir listened to him with an inflexible and immovable aspect, similar to that with which a wooden saint regards his eager supplicants. There was a second pause, when, after resuming his pleading more than once, Hartley was at length compelled to end it for want of matter.

The silence was broken by the elder fakir, who, after shooting a glance at his younger companion by a turn of the eye, without the least alteration of the position of the head and body, said, "The unbeliever has spoken like a poet. But does he think that the Nawaub Hyder Ali Khan Be-

hauder will contest with his son, Tippoo the Victorious, the possession of an infidel slave?"

Hartley received at the same time a side glance from Barak, as if encouraging him to plead his own cause. He suffered a minute to elapse, and then replied—

"The Nawaub is in the place of the prophet—a judge over the low as well as high. It is written that, when the Prophet decided a controversy between the two sparrows concerning a grain of rice, his wife Fatima said to him, 'Doth the missionary of Allah well to bestow his time in distributing justice on a matter so slight, and between such despicable litigants?' 'Know, woman,' answered the Prophet, 'that the sparrows and the grain of rice are the creations of Allah. They are not worth more than thou hast spoken; but justice is a treasure of inestimable price, and it must be imparted by him who holdeth power to all who require it at his hand. The prince doth the will of Allah, who gives it alike in small matters as in great, and to the poor as well as the powerful. To the hungry bird a grain of rice is as a chaplet of pearls to a sovereign.' I have spoken."

"*Bismallah!*—Praised be God! he hath spoken like a moullah," said the elder fakir, with a little more emotion, and some inclination of his head towards Barak, for on Hartley he scarcely deigned even to look."

"The lips have spoken it which cannot lie," replied Barak, and there was again a pause.

It was once more broken by Scheik Hali, who, addressing himself directly to Hartley, demanded of him, "Hast thou heard, Feringi' of aught of treason meditated by this *kafr* (infidel) against the Nawaub Behauder?"

"Out of a traitor cometh treason," said Hartley, "but, to speak after my knowledge, I am not conscious of such design."

"There is truth in the words of him," said the fakir, "who accuseth not his enemy save on his knowledge. The things thou hast spoken shall be laid before the Nawaub; and as Allah and he will, so shall the issue be. Meantime, return to thy khan, and prepare to attend the vakeel of thy government, who is to travel with dawn to Bangalore, the strong, the happy, the holy city. Peace be with thee! Is it not so, my son?"

Barak, to whom this appeal was made, replied, "Even as my father hath spoken."

Hartley had no alternative but to arise and take his leave, with the usual phrase, "*Salam*—God's peace be with you!"

His youthful guide, who waited his return without, conducted him once more to his kahn, through by-paths which he could not have found out without pilotage. His thoughts were in the mean time strongly engaged on his late interview. He knew the Moslem men of religion were not implicitly to be trusted. The whole scene might be a scheme of Barak to get rid of the trouble of patronizing a European in a delicate affair; and he determined to be guided by what should seem to confirm or discredit the intimation which he had received.

On his arrival at the kahn he found the vakeel of the British government in a great bustle, preparing to obey directions transmitted to him by the Nawaub's dewan, or treasurer, directing him to depart the next morning with break of day for Bangalore.

He expressed great discontent at the order, and when Hartley intimated his purpose of accompanying him, seemed to think him a fool for his pains, hinting the probability that Hyder meant to get rid of them both by means of the freebooters, through whose countries they were to pass with such a feeble escort. This fear gave way to another when the time of departure came, at which moment there rode up about two hundred of the Nawaub's native cavalry. The sirdar who commanded these troops behaved with civility, and stated that he was directed to attend upon the travelers, and to provide for their safety and convenience on the journey; but his manner was reserved and distant, and the vakeel insisted that the force was intended to prevent their escape rather than for their protection. Under such unpleasant auspices, the journey between Seringapatam and Bangalore was accomplished in two days and part of a third, the distance being nearly eighty miles.

On arriving in view of this fine and populous city, they found an encampment already established within a mile of its walls. It occupied a *tope*, or knoll, covered with trees, and looked full on the gardens which Tippoo had created in one quarter of the city. The rich pavilions of the principal persons flamed with silk and gold; and spears with gilded points, or poles supporting gold knobs, displayed numerous little banners, inscribed with the name of the Prophet. This was the camp of the Begum Mootee Mahul, who, with a small body of her troops, about two hundred men, was waiting the return of Tippoo under the walls of Bangalore. Their private motives for desiring a meeting the reader is acquainted with; to the public the visit of the Begum had

only the appearance of an act of deference, frequently paid by inferior and subordinate princes to the patrons whom they depend upon.

These facts ascertained, the sirdar of the Nawaub took up his own encampment within sight of that of the Begum, but at about half a mile's distance, despatching to the city a messenger to announce to the Prince Tippoo, so soon as he should arrive, that he had come hither with the English vakeel.

The bustle of pitching a few tents was soon over, and Hartley, solitary and sad, was left to walk under the shade of two or three mango-trees, and, looking to the displayed streamers of the Begum's encampment, to reflect that amid these insignia of Mohammedanism Menie Gray remained, destined by a profligate and treacherous lover to the fate of slavery to a heathen tyrant. The consciousness of being in her vicinity added to the bitter pangs with which Hartley contemplated her situation, and reflected how little chance there appeared of his being able to rescue her from it by the mere force of reason and justice, which was all he could oppose to the selfish passions of a voluptuous tyrant. A lover of romance might have meditated some means of effecting her release by force or address ; but Hartley, though a man of courage, had no spirit of adventure, and would have regarded as desperate any attempt of the kind.

His sole gleam of comfort arose from the impression which he had apparently made upon the elder fakir, which he could not help hoping might be of some avail to him. But on one thing he was firmly resolved, and that was, not to relinquish the cause he had engaged in whilst a grain of hope remained. He had seen in his own profession a quickening and a revival of life in the patient's eye, even when glazed apparently by the hand of death ; and he was taught confidence amidst moral evil by his success in relieving that which was physical only.

While Hartley was thus meditating, he was roused to attention by a heavy firing of artillery from the high bastions of the town ; and, turning his eyes in that direction, he could see advancing, on the northern side of Bangalore, a tide of cavalry, riding tumultuously forward, brandishing their spears in all different attitudes, and pressing their horses to a gallop. The clouds of dust which attended this vanguard, for such it was, combined with the smoke of the guns, did not permit Hartley to see distinctly the main body which followed ; but the appearance of howdahed elephants

and royal banners, dimly seen through the haze, plainly intimated the return of Tippoo to Bangalore; while shouts and irregular discharges of musketry announced the real or pretended rejoicing of the inhabitants. The city gates received the living torrent which rolled towards them; the clouds of smoke and dust were soon dispersed, and the horizon was restored to serenity and silence.

The meeting between persons of importance, more especially of royal rank, is a matter of very great consequence in India, and generally much address is employed to induce the person receiving the visit to come as far as possible to meet the visitor. From merely rising up, or going to the edge of the carpet, to advancing to the gate of the palace, to that of the city, or, finally, to a mile or two on the road, is all subject to negotiation. But Tippoo's impatience to possess the fair European induced him to grant on this occasion a much greater degree of courtesy than the Begum had dared to expect, and he appointed his garden, adjacent to the city walls, and indeed included within the precincts of the fortifications, as the place of their meeting; the hour noon, on the day succeeding his arrival; for the natives seldom move early in the morning, or before having broken their fast. This was intimated to the Begum's messenger by the prince in person, as, kneeling before him, he presented the *nuzzar* (a tribute consisting of three, five, or seven gold mohurs, always an odd number), and received in exchange a *khelaut*, or dress of honor. The messenger, in return, was eloquent in decribing the importance of his mistress, her devoted veneration for the prince, the pleasure which she experienced on the prospect of their *motakul*, or meeting, and concluded with a more modest compliment to his own extraordinary talents, and the confidence which the Begum reposed in him. He then departed; and orders were given that on the next day all should be in readiness for the *sowarree*, or grand procession, when the prince was to receive the Begum as his honored guest at his pleasure-house in the gardens.

Long before the appointed hour, the rendezvous of fakirs, beggars, and idlers, before the gate of the palace, intimated the excited expectations of those who usually attend processions; while a more urgent set of mendicants, the courtiers, were hastening thither, on horses or elephants, as their means afforded, always in a hurry to show their zeal, and with a speed proportioned to what they hoped or feared.

At noon precisely, a discharge of cannon, placed in the outer courts, as also of matchlocks and of small swivels car-

ried by camels (the poor animals shaking their long ears at every discharge), announced that Tippoo had mounted his elephant. The solemn and deep sound of the *naggra*, or state drum, borne upon an elephant, was then heard like the distant discharge of artillery, followed by a long roll of musketry, and was instantly answered by that of numerous trumpets and tom-toms, or common drums, making a discordant, but yet a martial, din. The noise increased as the procession traversed the outer courts of the palace in succession, and at length issued from the gates, having at their head the *chobdars*, bearing silver sticks and clubs, and shouting at the pitch of their voices the titles and the virtues of Tippoo, the great, the generous, the invincible—strong as Rustan, just as Noushirvan—with a short prayer for his continued health.

After these came a confused body of men on foot, bearing spears, matchlocks, and banners, and intermixed with horsemen, some in complete shirts of mail, with caps of steel under their turbans, some in a sort of defensive armor, consisting of rich silk dresses, rendered saber-proof by being stuffed with cotton. These champions preceded the prince, as whose body-guards they acted. It was not till after this time that Tippoo raised his celebrated tiger-regiment, disciplined and armed according to European fashion. Immediately before the prince came, on a small elephant, a hard-faced, severe-looking man, by office the distributer of alms, which he flung in showers of small copper money among the fakirs and beggars, whose scrambles to collect them seemed to augment their amount; while the grim-looking agent of Mohammedan charity, together with his elephant which marched with half angry eyes, and its trunk curled upwards, seemed both alike ready to chastise those whom poverty should render too importunate.

Tippoo himself next appeared, richly appareled, and seated on an elephant, which, carrying its head above all the others in the procession, seemed proudly conscious of superior dignity. The howdah, or seat, which the prince occupied was of silver, embossed and gilt, having behind a place for a confidential servant, who waved the great chowry, or cow-tail, to keep off the flies; but who could also occasionally perform the task of spokesman, being well versed in all terms of flattery and compliment. The caparisons of the royal elephant were of scarlet cloth, richly embroidered with gold. Behind Tippoo came the various courtiers and officers of the household, mounted chiefly on elephants,

all arrayed in their most splendid attire, and exhibiting the greatest pomp.

In this manner the procession advanced down the principal street of the town, to the gate of the royal gardens. The houses were ornamented by broadcloth, silk shawls, and embroidered carpets of the richest colors, displayed from the verandas and windows; even the meanest hut was adorned with some pieces of cloth, so that the whole street had a singularly rich and gorgeous appearance.

This splendid procession having entered the royal gardens, approached, through a long avenue of lofty trees, a *chabootra*, or platform of white marble, canopied by arches of the same material, which occupied the center. It was raised four or five feet from the ground, covered with white cloth and Persian carpets. In the center of the platform was the *musmud*, or state cushion of the prince, six feet square, composed of crimson velvet, richly embroidered. By especial grace, a small low cushion was placed on the right of the prince, for the occupation of the Begum. In front of this platform was a square tank or pond, of marble, four feet deep, and filled to the brim with water as clear as crystal, having a large jet or fountain in the middle, which threw up a column of it to the height of twenty feet.

The Prince Tippoo had scarcely dismounted from his elephant and occupied the musnud, or throne of cushions, when the stately form of the Begum was seen advancing to the place of rendezvous. The elephant being left at the gate of the gardens opening into the country, opposite to that by which the procession of Tippoo had entered, she was carried in an open litter, richly ornamented with silver, and borne on the shoulders of six black slaves. Her person was as richly attired as silks and gems could accomplish.

Richard Middlemas, as the Begum's general or bukshee, walked nearest to her litter, in a dress as magnificent in itself as it was remote from all European costume, being that of a *banka*, or Indian courtier. His turban was of rich silk and gold, twisted very hard, and placed on one side of his head, its ends hanging down on the shoulder. His mustachios were turned and curled, and his eyelids stained with antimony. The vest was of gold brocade, with a *cummerband* or sash, around his waist, corresponding to his turban. He carried in his hand a large sword, sheathed in a scabbard of crimson velvet, and wore around his middle a broad embroidered sword-belt. What thoughts he had under his gay attire, and the bold bearing which

corresponded to it, it would be fearful to unfold. His least detestable hopes were perhaps those which tended to save Menie Gray, by betraying the prince who was about to confide in him, and the Begum, at whose intercession Tippoo's confidence was to be reposed.

The litter stopped as it approached the tank, on the opposite side of which the prince was seated on his musnud. Middlemas assisted the Begum to descend, and led her, deeply veiled with silver musline, towards the platform of marble. The rest of the retinue of the Begum followed in their richest and most gaudy attire—all males, however; nor was there a symptom of woman being in her train, except that a close litter, guarded by twenty black slaves, having their sabers drawn, remained at some distance in a thicket of flowering shrubs.

When Tippoo Sahib, through the dim haze which hung over the waterfall, discerned the splendid train of the Begum advancing, he arose from this musnud, so as to receive her near the foot of his throne, and exchanged greetings with her upon the pleasure of meeting, and inquiries after their mutual health. He then conducted her to the cushion placed near to his own, while his courtiers anxiously showed their politeness in accommodating those of the Begum with places upon the carpets around, where they all sat down cross-legged, Richard Middlemas occupying a conspicuous situation.

The people of inferior note stood behind, and amongst them was the sirdar of Hyder Ali, with Hartley and the Madras vakeel. It would be impossible to describe the feelings with which Hartley recognized the apostate Middlemas and the amazonian Mrs. Montreville. The sight of them worked up his resolution to make an appeal against them, in full durbar, to the justice which Tippoo was obliged to render to all who should complain of injuries. In the mean while, the prince, who had hitherto spoken in a low voice, while acknowledging, it is to be supposed, the services and the fidelity of the Begum, now gave the sign to his attendant, who said, in an elevated tone. "Wherefore, and to requite these services, the mighty prince, at the request of the mighty Begum Mootee Mahul, beautiful as the moon, and wise as the daughter of Giamschid, had decreed to take into his service the bukshee of her armies, and to invest him, as one worthy of all confidence, with the keeping of his beloved capital of Bangalore."

The voice of the crier had scarce ceased, when it was an-

swered by one as loud, which sounded from the crowd of bystanders, "Cursed is he who maketh the robber Leik his treasurer or trusteth the lives of Moslemah to the command of an apostate!"

With unutterable satisfaction, yet with trembling doubt and anxiety, Hartley traced the speech to the elder fakir, the companion of Barak. Tippoo seemed not to notice the interruption, which passed for that of some mad devotee, to whom the Moslem princes permit great freedoms. The durbar, therefore, recovered from their surprise; and, in answer to the proclamation, united in the shout of applause which is expected to attend every annunciation of the royal pleasure.

Their acclamation had no sooner ceased than Middlemas arose, bent himself before the musnud, and, in a set speech, declared his unworthiness of such high honor as had now been conferred, and his zeal for the prince's service. Something remained to be added, but his speech faltered, his limbs shook, and his tongue seemed to refuse its office.

The Begum started from her seat, though contrary to etiquette, and said, as if to supply the deficiency in the speech of her officer, "My slave would say that, in acknowledgment of so great an honor conferred on my bukshee, I am so void of means that I can only pray your Highness will deign to accept a lily from Frangistan, to plant within the recesses of the secret garden of thy pleasures. Let my lord's guards carry yonder litter to the zenana."

A female scream was heard, as, at a signal from Tippoo, the guards of his seraglio advanced to receive the closed litter from the attendants of the Begum.

The voice of the old fakir was heard louder and sterner than before—"Cursed is the prince who barters justice for lust! He shall die in the gate by the sword of the stranger."

"This is too insolent!" said Tippoo. "Drag forward that fakir, and cut his robe into tatters on his back with your *chabouks*."

But a scene ensued like that in the hall of Seyd. All who attempted to obey the command of the incensed despot fell back from the fakir, as they would from the Angel of Death. He flung his cap and fictitious beard on the ground, and the incensed countenance of Tippoo was subdued in an instant, when he encountered the stern and awful eye of his father. A sign dismissed him from the throne, which Hyder himself ascended, while the officious menials hartily disrobed him of his tattered cloak, and flung on him a robe of regal splendor,

and placed on his head a jeweled turban. The durbar rang with acclamations to Hyder Ali Khan Behauder, "the good, the wise, the discoverer of hidden things, who cometh into the divan like the sun bursting from the clouds."

The Nawaub at length signed for silence, and was promptly obeyed. He looked majestically around him, and at length bent his look upon Tippoo, whose downcast eyes, as he stood before the throne with his arms folded on his bosom, were strongly contrasted with the haughty air of authority which he had worn but a moment before. "Thou hast been willing," said the Nawaub, "to barter the safety of thy capital for the possession of a white slave. But the beauty of a fair woman caused Solomon ben David to stumble in his path; how much more, then, should the son of Hyder Naig remain firm under temptation! That men may see clearly, we must remove the light which dazzles them. Yonder Feringi woman must be placed at my disposal."

"To hear is to obey," replied Tippoo, while the deep gloom on his brow showed what his forced submission cost his proud and passionate spirit.

In the hearts of the courtiers present reigned the most eager curiosity to see the *dénouement* of the scene, but not a trace of that wish was suffered to manifest itself on features accustomed to conceal all internal sensations. The feelings of the Begum were hidden under her veil; while, in spite of a bold attempt to conceal his alarm, the perspiration stood in large drops on the brow of Richard Middlemas.

The next words of the Nawaub sounded like music in the ear of Hartley.

"Carry the Feringi woman to the tent of the Sirdar Belash Cassim (the chief to whom Hartley had been committed). Let her be tended in all honor, and let him prepare to escort her, with the vakeel and the *hakim* Hartley, to the Payeen-Ghaut (the country beneath the passes), answering for their safety with his head." The litter was on its road to the sirdar's tents ere the Nawaub had done speaking. "For thee, Tippoo," continued Hyder, "I am not come hither to deprive thee of authority, or to disgrace thee before the durbar. Such things as thou hast promised to this Feringi, proceed to make them good. The sun calleth not back the splendor which he lends to the moon; and the father obscures not the dignity which he has conferred on the son. What thou hast promised, that do thou proceed to make good."

The ceremony of investiture was therefore recommenced,

by which the Prince Tippoo conferred on Middlemas the important government of the city of Bangalore, probably with the internal resolution that, since he was himself deprived of the fair European, he would take an early opportunity to remove the new killedar from his charge ; while Middlemas accepted it with the throbbing hope that he might yet outwit both father and son. The deed of investiture was read aloud, the robe of honor was put upon the newly-created killedar, and a hundred voices, while they blessed the prudent choice of Tippoo, wished the governor good fortune, and victory over his enemies.

A horse was led forward, as the prince's gift. It was a fine steed of the Cuttyawar breed, high-crested, with broad hind-quarters ; he was of a white color, but had the extremity of his tail and mane stained red. His saddle was red velvet, the bridle and crupper studded with gilded knobs. Two attendants on lesser horses led this prancing animal, one holding the lance and the other the long spear of their patron. The horse was shown to the applauding courtiers,and withdrawn, in order to be led in state through the streets, while the new killedar should follow on the elephant, another present usual on such an occasion, which was next made to advance, that the world might admire the munificence of the prince.

The huge animal approached the platform, shaking his large wrinkled head, which he raised and sunk, as if impatient, and curling upwards his trunk from time to time, as if to show the gulf of his tongueless mouth. Gracefully retiring with the deepest obeisance, the killedar, well pleased the audience was finished, stood by the neck of the elephant, expecting the conductor of the animal would make him kneel down, that he might ascend the gilded howdah which awaited his occupancy.

"Hold, Feringi," said Hyder. "Thou hast received all that was promised thee by the bounty of Tippoo. Accept now what is the fruit of the justice of Hyder."

As he spoke, he signed with his finger, and the driver of the elephant instantly conveyed to the animal the pleasure of the Nawaub. Curling his long trunk around the neck of the ill-fated European, the monster suddenly threw the wretch prostrate before him, and, stamping his huge shapeless foot upon his breast, put an end at once to his life and to his crimes. The cry which the victim uttered was mimicked by the roar of the monster, and a sound like an hysterical laugh mingling with a scream, which rung from

under the veil of the Begum. The elephant once more raised his trunk aloft, and gaped fearfully.

The courtiers preserved a profound silence; but Tippoo, upon whose muslin robe a part of the victim's blood had spirted, held it up to the Nawaub, exclaiming, in a sorrowful yet resentful tone—"Father—father, was it thus my promise should have been kept?"

"Know, foolish boy," said Hyder Ali, "that the carrion which lies there was in a plot to deliver Bangalore to the Feringis and the Mahrattas. This Begum (she started when she heard herself named) has given us warning of the plot, and has so merited her pardon for having originally concurred in it,—whether altogether out of love to us we will not too curiously inquire. Hence with that lump of bloody clay, and let the hakim Hartley and the English vakeel come before me."

They were brought forward, while some of the attendants flung sand upon the bloody traces, and others removed the crushed corpse.

"Hakim," said Hyder, "thou shalt return with the Feringi woman, and with gold to compensate her injuries, wherein the Begum, as is fitting, shall contribute a share. Do thou say to thy nation, Hyder Ali acts justly." The Nawaub then inclined himself graciously to Hartley, and then turning to the vakeel, who appeared much discomposed, "You have brought to me," he said, "words of peace, while your masters meditated a treacherous war. It is not upon such as you that my vengeance ought to alight. But tell the kafr, or infidel, Paupiah and his unworthy master that Hyder Ali sees too clearly to suffer to be lost by treason the advantages he has gained by war. Hitherto I have been in the Carnatic as a mild prince; in future I will be a destroying tempest. Hitherto I have made inroads as a compassionate and merciful conqueror; hereafter I will be the messenger whom Allah sends to the kingdoms which He visits in judgment."

It is well known how dreadfully the Nawaub kept this promise, and how he and his son afterwards sunk before the discipline and bravery of the Europeans. The scene of just punishment which he so faithfully exhibited might be owing to his policy, his internal sense of right, and to the ostentation of displaying it before an Englishman of sense and intelligence, or to all of these motives mingled together, but in what proportions it is not for us to distinguish.

Hartley reached the coast in safety with his precious charge, rescued from a dreadful fate when she was almost

beyond hope. But the nerves and constitution of Menie Gray had received a shock from which she long suffered severely, and never entirely recovered. The principal ladies of the settlement, moved by the singular tale of her distress, received her with the utmost kindness, and exercised towards her the most attentive and affectionate hospitality. The Nawaub, faithful to his promise, remitted to her a sum of no less than ten thousand gold mohurs, extorted, as was surmised, almost entirely from the hoards of the Begum Mootee Mahul, or Montreville. Of the fate of that adventuress nothing was known for certainty; but her forts and government were taken into Hyder's custody, and report said that, her power being abolished and her consequence lost, she died by poison, either taken by herself or administered by some other person.

It might be thought a natural conclusion of the history of Menie Gray that she should have married Hartley, to whom she stood much indebted for his heroic interference in her behalf. But her feelings were too much and too painfully agitated, her health too much shattered, to permit her to entertain thoughts of a matrimonial connection, even with the acquaintance of her youth and the champion of her freedom. Time might have removed these obstacles, but not two years after their adventures in Mysore the gallant and disinterested Hartley fell a victim to his professional courage in withstanding the progress of a contagious distemper, which he at length caught, and under which he sunk. He left a considerable part of the moderate fortune which he had acquired to Menie Gray, who, of course, did not want many advantageous offers of a matrimonial character. But she respected the memory of Hartley too much to subdue in behalf of another the reasons which induced her to refuse the hand which he had so well deserved—nay, it may be thought, had so fairly won.

She returned to Britain—what seldom occurs—unmarried though wealthy; and, settling in her native village, appeared to find her only pleasure in acts of benevolence, which seemed to exceed the extent of her fortune, had not her very retired life been taken into consideration. Two or three persons with whom she was intimate could trace in her character that generous and disinterested simplicity and affection which were the groundwork of her character. To the world at large her habits seemed those of the ancient Roman matron, which is recorded on her tomb in these four words,

DOMUM MANSIT—LANAM FECIT.

MR. CROFTANGRY'S CONCLUSION

If you tell a good jest,
And please all the rest,
  Comes Dingley, and asks you, "What was it?"
And before she can know,
Away she will go
  To seek an old rag in the closet.

DEAN SWIFT.

WHILE I was inditing the goodly matter which my readers have just perused, I might be said to go through a course of breaking-in to stand criticism, like a shooting-pony to stand fire. By some of those venial breaches of confidence which always take place on the like occasions, my private flirtations with the muse of fiction became a matter whispered in Miss Fairscribe's circle, some ornaments of which were, I suppose, highly interested in the progress of the affair, while others "really thought Mr. Chrystal Croftangry might have had more wit at his time of day." Then came the sly intimation, the oblique remark, all that sugar-lipped raillery which is fitted for the situation of a man about to do a foolish thing, whether it be to publish or to marry, and that accompanied with the discreet nods and winks of such friends as are in the secret, and the obliging eagerness of others to know all about it.

At length the affair became so far public that I was induced to face a tea-party with my manuscript in my pocket, looking as simple and modest as any gentleman of a certain age need to do upon such an occasion. When tea had been carried round, handkerchiefs and smelling bottles prepared, I had the honor of reading *The Surgeon's Daughter* for the entertainment of the evening. It went off excellently. My friend Mr. Fairscribe, who had been seduced from his desk to join the literary circle, only fell asleep twice, and readily recovered his attention by help of his snuff-box. The ladies were politely attentive, and when the cat, or the dog, or a next neighbor tempted an individual to relax, Katie Fairscribe was on the alert, like an active whipper-in, with look, touch, or whisper, to recall them to a sense of what

was going on. Whether Miss Katie was thus active merely to enforce the literary discipline of her coterie, or whether she was really interested by the beauties of the piece, and desirous to enforce them on others, I will not venture to ask, in case I should end in liking the girl—and she is really a pretty one—better than wisdom would warrant, either for my sake or hers.

I must own my story here and there flagged a good deal; perhaps there were faults in my reading, for while I should have been attending to nothing but how to give the words effect as they existed, I was feeling the chilling consciousness that they might have been, and ought to have been, a great deal better. However, we kindled up at last when we got to the East Indies, although, on the mention of tigers, an old lady, whose tongue had been impatient for an hour, broke in with, "I wonder if Mr. Croftangry ever heard the story of Tiger Tullideph?" and had nearly inserted the whole narrative as an episode in my tale. She was, however, brought to reason, and the subsequent mention of shawls, diamonds, turbans, and cummerbands had their usual effect in awakening the imaginations of the fair auditors. At the extinction of the faithless lover in a way so horribly new, I I had, as indeed I expected, the good fortune to excite that expression of painful interest which is produced by drawing in the breath through the compressed lips—nay, one miss of fourteen actually screamed.

At length my task was ended, and the fair circle rained odors upon me, as they pelt beaux at the carnival with sugar-plums, and drench them with scented spices. There was "Beautiful," and "Sweetly interesting," and "O, Mr. Croftangry," and, "How much obliged," and "What a delightful evening," and "O, Miss Katie, how could you keep such a secret so long!" While the dear souls were thus smothering me with rose-leaves, the merciless old lady carried them all off by a disquisition upon shawls, which she had the impudence to say arose entirely out of my story. Miss Katie endeavored to stop the flow of her eloquence in vain: she threw all other topics out of the field, and from the genuine Indian she made a digression to the imitation shawls now made at Paisley out of real Thibet wool, not to be known from the actual country shawl, except by some inimitable cross-stitch in the border. "It is well," said the old lady, wrapping herself up in a rich Kashmire, "that there is some way of knowing a thing that cost fifty guineas from an article that is sold for five; but I venture to say

there is not one out of ten thousand that would understand the difference."

The politeness of some of the fair ladies would now have brought back the conversation to the forgotten subject of our meeting. "How could you, Mr. Croftangry, collect all these hard words about India—you were never there?"

"No, madam, I have not had that advantage; but, like the imitative operatives of Paisley, I have composed my shawl by incorporating into the woof a little Thibet wool, which my excellent friend and neighbor, Colonel Mackerris, one of the best fellows who ever trod a Highland moor, or dived into an Indian jungle, had the goodness to supply me with."

My rehearsal, however, though not absolutely and altogether to my taste, has prepared me in some measure for the less tempered and guarded sentence of the world. So a man must learn to encounter a foil before he confronts a sword; and to take up my original simile, a horse must be accustomed to a *feu de joie* before you can ride him against a volley of balls. Well, Corporal Nym's philosophy is not the worst that has been preached, "Things must be as they may." If my lucubrations give pleasure, I may again require the attention of the courteous reader; if not, here end the

CHRONICLES OF THE CANONGATE.

END OF THE SURGEON'S DAUGHTER.

APPENDIX TO INTRODUCTION

TO

THE SURGEON'S DAUGHTER

MR. TRAIN was requested by Sir Walter Scott to give him in writing the story as nearly as possible in the shape in which he had told it; but the following narrative, which he drew up accordingly, did not reach Abbotsford until July 1832:—

In the old stock of Fife there was not perhaps an individual whose exertions were followed by consequences of such a remarkable nature as those of Davie Duff, popularly called the "Thane of Fife," who, from a very humble parentage, rose to fill one of the chairs of the magistracy of his native burgh. By industry and economy in early life, he obtained the means of erecting, solely on his own account, one of those ingenious manufactories for which Fifeshire is justly celebrated. From the day on which the industrious artisan first took his seat at the council board, he attended so much to the interests of the little privileged community, that civic honors were conferred on him as rapidly as the set of the royalty * could legally admit.

To have the right of walking to church on holyday, preceded by a phalanx of halberdiers, in habiliments fashioned as in former times, seems, in the eyes of many a guild brother, to be a very enviable pitch of worldly grandeur. Few persons were ever more proud of civic honors than the Thane of Fife, but he knew well how to turn his political influence to the best account. The council, court, and other business of the burgh occupied much of his time, which caused him to entrust the management of his manufactory to a near relation whose name was D——, a young man of dissolute habits; but the Thane, seeing at last that, by continuing that extravagant person in that charge, his affairs would, in all probability, fall into a state of bankruptcy, applied to the member of Parliament for that district to obtain a situation for his relation in the civil department of the state. The knight, whom it is here unnecessary to name, knowing how effectually the Thane ruled the little burgh, applied in the proper quarter, and actually obtained an appointment for D—— in the civil service of the East India Company.

A respectable surgeon, whose residence was in a neighboring village, had a beautiful daughter named Emma, who had long been courted by D——. Immediately before his departure to India, as a mark of mutual affection, they exchanged miniatures, taken by an eminent artist in Fife, and each set in a locket, for the purpose of having the object of affection always in view.

The eyes of the old Thane were now turned towards Hindostan with much anxiety; but his relation had not long arrived in that distant quarter of the globe before he had the satisfaction of receiving a letter, conveying the welcome intelligence of his having taken possession of his new station in a large frontier town of the Company's dominions, and that great emoluments were attached to the situation; which was confirmed by several subsequent communications of the most gratifying description to the old Thane, who took great pleasure in spreading the news of the reformed habits and singular good fortune of his intended heir. None of all his former acquaintances heard with such joy the favorable report of the successful adventurer in the East as did the fair and accomplished daughter of the village surgeon: but his previous character caused her to keep her own correspondence with him secret from her parents, to whom even the circumstance of her being acquainted with D—— was wholly unknown, till her father received a letter from him, in which he assured him of his attachment

* The constitution of the borough.

to Emma long before his departure from Fife: that, having been so happy as to gain her affections, he would have made her his wife before leaving his native country, had he then had the means of supporting her in a suitable rank through life; and that, having it now in his power to do so, he only waited the consent of her parents to fulfil the vow he had formerly made.

The doctor having a large family, with a very limited income to support them, and understanding that D—— had at last become a person of sober and industrious habits, he gave his consent, in which Emma's mother fully concurred.

Aware of the straitened circumstances of the doctor, D—— remitted a sum of money to complete at Edinburgh Emma's Oriental education, and fit her out in her journey to India; she was to embark at Sheerness, on board one of the Company's ships, for a port in India, at which place, he said, he would wait her arrival, with a retinue suited to a person of his rank in society.

Emma set out from her father's house just in time to secure a passage, as proposed by her intended husband, accompanied by her only brother, who, on their arrival at Sheerness, met one C——, an old schoolfellow, captain of the ship by which Emma was to proceed to India.

It was the particular desire of the doctor that his daughter should be committed to the care of that gentleman, from the time of her leaving the shores of Britain till the intended marriage ceremony was duly performed on her arrival in India—a charge that was frankly undertaken by the generous sea-captain.

On the arrival of the fleet at the appointed port, D——, with a large cavalcade of mounted Pindarees, was, as expected, in attendance, ready to salute Emma on landing, and to carry her direct into the interior of the country. C——, who had made several voyages to the shores of Hindostan, knowing something of Hindoo manners and customs, was surprised to see a private individual in the Company's service with so many attendants; and when D—— declined having the marriage ceremony performed, according to the rites of the church, till he returned to the place of his abode, C——, more and more confirmed in his suspicion that all was not right, resolved not to part with Emma till he had fulfilled, in the most satisfactory manner, the promise he had made before leaving England, of giving her duly away in marriage. Not being able by her entreaties to alter the resolution of D——, Emma solicited her protector C—— to accompany her to the place of her intended destination, to which he most readily agreed, taking with him as many of his crew as he deemed sufficient to ensure the safe custody of his innocent *protégée*, should any attempt be made to carry her away by force.

Both parties journeyed onwards till they arrived at a frontier town, where a native rajah was waiting the arrival of the fair maid of Fife, with whom he had fallen deeply in love, from seeing her miniature likeness in the possession of D——, to whom he had paid a large sum of money for the original, and had only entrusted him to convey her in state to the seat of his government.

No sooner was this villainous action of D—— known to C—— than he communicated the whole particulars to the commanding officer of a regiment of Scotch Highlanders that happened to be quartered in that part of India, begging at the same time, for the honor of Caledonia and protection of injured innocence, that he would use the means in his power of resisting any attempt that might be made by the native chief to wrest from their hands the virtuous female who had been so shamefully decoyed from her native country by the worst of mankind. Honor occupies too large a space in the heart of the Gael to resist such a call of humanity.

The rajah, finding his claim was not to be acceded to, and resolving to enforce the same, assembled his troops, and attacked with great fury the place where the affrighted Emma was for a time secured by her countrymen, who fought in her defence with all their native valor, which at length so overpowered their assailants, that they were forced to retire in every direction, leaving behind many of their slain, among whom was found the mangled corpse of the perfidious D——.

C—— was immediately afterwards married to Emma, and my informant assured me he saw them many years afterwards, living happily together in the county of Kent, on the fortune bequeathed by the "Thane of Fife."

J. T.

CASTLE DOUGLAS, *July*, 1832.

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"The Constable awaited her at the fatal bridge."

THE BETROTHED

AND

THE HIGHLAND WIDOW

BY

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

NEW YORK
THE WAVERLEY BOOK COMPANY
1898

INTRODUCTION TO THE BETROTHED

THE *Tales of the Crusaders* was determined upon as the title of the following series of these novels, rather by the advice of the few friends whom death has now rendered still fewer, than by the Author's own taste. Not but that he saw plainly enough the interest which might be excited by the very name of the Crusades; but he was conscious, at the same time, that that interest was of a character which it might be more easy to create than to satisfy, and that by the mention of so magnificent a subject each reader might be induced to call up to his imagination a sketch so extensive and so grand that it might not be in the power of the Author to fill it up, who would thus stand in the predicament of the dwarf bringing with him a standard to measure his own stature, and showing himself, therefore, says Sterne, "a dwarf more ways than one."

It is a fact, if it were worth while to examine it, that the publisher and author, however much their general interests are the same, may be said to differ so far as title-pages are concerned; and it is a secret of the tale-telling art, if it could be termed a secret worth knowing, that a taking title, as it is called, best answers the purpose of the book-seller, since it often goes far to cover his risk, and sells an edition not unfrequently before the public have well seen it. But the author ought to seek more permanent fame, and wish that his work, when its leaves are first cut open, should be at least fairly judged of. Thus many of the best novelists have been anxious to give their works such titles as render it out of the reader's power to conjecture their contents, until they should have an opportunity of reading them.

All this did not prevent the *Tales of the Crusaders* from being the title fixed on; and the celebrated year of projects (1825) being the time of publication, an introduction was prefixed according to the humor of the day.

The first tale of the series was influenced in its structure

rather by the wish to avoid the general expectations which might be formed from the title than to comply with any one of them, and so disappoint the rest. The story was, therefore, less an incident belonging to the Crusades than one which was occasioned by the singular cast of mind introduced and spread wide by these memorable undertakings. The confusion among families was not the least concomitant evil of the extraordinary preponderance of this superstition. It was no unusual thing for a crusader, returning from his long toils of war and pilgrimage, to find his family augmented by some young offshoot, of whom the deserted matron could give no very accurate account, or perhaps to find his marriage bed filled, and that, instead of becoming nurse to an old man, his household dame had preferred being the lady-love of a young one. Numerous are the stories of this kind told in different parts of Europe; and the returned knight or baron, according to his temper, sat down good-naturedly contented with the account which his lady gave of a doubtful matter, or called in blood and fire to vindicate his honor, which, after all, had been endangered chiefly by his forsaking his household gods to seek adventures in Palestine.

Scottish tradition, quoted, I think, in some part of the *Border Minstrelsy*, ascribes to the clan of Tweedie, a family once stout and warlike, a descent which would not have misbecome a hero of antiquity. A baron, somewhat elderly we may suppose, had wedded a buxom young lady, and some months after their union he left her to ply the distaff alone in his old tower, among the mountains of the county of Peebles, near the sources of the Tweed. He returned after seven or eight years, no uncommon space for a pilgrimage to Palestine, and found his family had not been lonely in his absence, the lady having been cheered by the arrival of a stranger (of whose approach she could give the best account of any one), who hung on her skirts, and called her mammy, and was just such as the baron would have longed to call his son, but that he could by no means make his age correspond, according to the doctrine of civilians, with his own departure for Palestine. He applied to his wife, therefore, for the solution of this dilemma. The lady, after many floods of tears, which she had reserved for the occasion, informed the honest gentleman, that, walking one day alone by the banks of the infant river, a human form arose from a deep eddy, still known and termed Tweed Pool, who deigned to inform her that he was the tutelar genius of the stream, and *bon gre mal gre*, became the father of the sturdy fellow whose appearance

had so much surprised her husband. This story, however suitable to pagan times, would have met with full credence from few of the baron's contemporaries, but the wife was young and beautiful, the husband old and in his dotage; her family (the Frasers, it is believed) were powerful and warlike, and the baron had had fighting enough in the holy wars. The event was, that he believed, or seemed to believe, the tale, and remained contented with the child with whom his wife and the Tweed had generously presented him. The only circumstance which preserved the memory of the incident was, that the youth retained the name of Tweed or Tweedie. The baron, meanwhile, could not, as the old Scotch song says, "Keep the cradle rowing," and the Tweed apparently thought one natural son was family enough for a decent Presbyterian lover; and so little gall had the baron in his composition, that, having bred up the young Tweed as his heir while he lived, he left him in that capacity when he died, and the son of the river-god founded the family of Drummelzier and others, from whom have flowed, in the phrase of the Ettrick Shepherd, "many a brave fellow and many a bauld feat."

The tale of the Noble Moringer is somewhat of the same nature; it exists in a collection of German popular songs, entitled *Sammlung Deutscher Volkslieder,* Berlin, 1807; published by Messrs. Busching and Von der Hagen. The song is supposed to be extracted from a manuscript chronicle of Nicolas Thomann, chaplain to St. Leonard in Weissenhorn, and dated 1533. The ballad, which is popular in Germany, is supposed, from the language, to have been composed in the 15th century. The Noble Moringer, a powerful baron of Germany, about to set out on a pilgrimage to the land of St. Thomas, with the geography of which we are not made acquainted, resolves to commit his castle, dominions, and lady to the vassal who should pledge him to keep watch over them till the seven years of his pilgrimage were accomplished. His chamberlain, an elderly and a cautious man, declines the trust, observing that seven days, instead of seven years, would be the utmost space to which he would consent to pledge himself for the fidelity of any woman. The esquire of the Noble Moringer confidently accepts the trust refused by the chamberlain, and the baron departs on his pilgrimage. The seven years are now elapsed, all save a single day and night, when, behold, a vision descends on the noble pilgrim as he sleeps in the land of the stranger.

It was the noble Moringer within an orchard slept,
When on the baron's slumbering sense a boding vision crept,
And whispered in his ear a voice, "'Tis time, sir knight, to wake;
Thy lady and thy heritage another master take.

"Thy tower another banner knows, thy steeds another rein,
And stoop them to another's will thy gallant vassal train;
And she, the lady of thy love, so faithful once and fair,
This night, within thy father's hall, she weds Marstetten's heir."

The Moringer starts up and prays to his patron, St. Thomas, to rescue him from the impending shame, which his devotion to his patron had placed him in danger of incurring. St. Thomas, who must have felt the justice of the imputation, performs a miracle. The Moringer's senses were drenched in oblivion, and when he waked he lay in a well-known spot of his own domain; on his right the castle of his fathers, and on his left the mill, which, as usual, was built not far distant from the castle.

He leaned upon his pilgrim's staff, and to the mill he drew;
So altered was his goodly form that none their master knew.
The baron to the miller said, "Good friend, for charity,
Tell a poor pilgrim, in your land, what tidings may there be?"

The miller answered him again—"He knew of little news,
Save that the lady of the land did a new bridegroom choose,
Her husband died in distant land, such is the constant word;
His death sits heavy on our souls, he was a worthy lord.

"Of him I held the little mill, which wins me living free;
God rest the baron in his grave, he aye was kind to me!
And when St. Martin's tide comes round, and millers take their toll,
The priest that prays for Moringer shall have both cope and stole."

The baron proceeds to the castle gate, which is bolted to prevent intrusion, while the inside of the mansion rung with preparations for the marriage of the lady. The pilgrim prayed the porter for entrance, conjuring him by his own sufferings, and for the sake of the late Moringer; by the orders of his lady, the warder gave him admittance.

Then up the hall paced Moringer, his step was sad and slow;
It sat full heavy on his heart, none seemed their lord to know.
He sat him on a lowly bench, oppressed with woe and wrong;
Short while he sat, but ne'er to him seemed little space so long.

Now spent was day, and feasting o'er, and come was evening hour,
The time was nigh when new-made brides retire to nuptial bower.
"Our castle's wont," a bridesman said, "hath been both firm and long;
No guest to harbor in our halls till he shall chant a song."

When thus called upon, the disguised baron sung the following melancholy ditty :

"Chill flows the lay of frozen age," 'twas thus the pilgrim sung,
"Nor golden meed, nor garment gay, unlocks his heavy tongue.
Once did I sit, thou bridegroom gay, at board as rich as thine,
And by my side as fair a bride, with all her charms, was mine.

"But time traced furrows on my face, and I grew silver-haired,
For locks of brown and cheeks of youth she left this brow and beard;
Once rich, but now a palmer poor, I tread life's latest stage,
And mingle with your bridal mirth the lay of frozen age."

The lady, moved at the doleful recollections which the palmer's song recalled, sent to him a cup of wine. The palmer, having exhausted the goblet, returned it, and having first dropped in the cup his nuptial ring, requested the lady to pledge her venerable guest.

The ring hath caught the lady's eye, she views it close and near,
Then might you hear her shriek aloud, "The Moringer is here!"
Then might you see her start from seat, while tears in torrents fell,
But if she wept for joy or woe, the ladies best can tell.

Full loud she uttered thanks to heaven and every saintly power,
That had restored the Moringer before the midnight hour;
And loud she uttered vow on vow, that never was there bride,
That had like her preserved her troth, or been so sorely tri d.

"Yes, here I claim the praise," she said, "to constant matrons due,
Who keep the troth that they have plight so steadfastly and true;
For count the term howe'er you will, so that you count aright,
Seven twelvemonths and a day are out when bells toll twelve to-night."

It was Marstetten then rose up, his falchion there he drew,
He kneeled before the Moringer, and down his weapon threw;
"My oath and knightly faith are broke," these were the words he said;
"Then take, my liege, thy vassal's sword, and take thy vassal's head."

The noble Moringer he smiled, and then aloud did say,
"He gathers wisdom that hath roamed seven twelvemonths and a day;
My daughter now hath fifteen years, fame speaks her sweet and fair;
I give her for the bride you lose, and name her for my heir.

"The young bridegroom hath youthful bride, the old bridegroom the old,
Whose faith was kept till term and tide so punctually were told;
But blessings on the warder kind that oped my castle gate,
For had I come at morrow tide, I came a day too late." *

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* These verses are quoted from the Author's own translation, with a few verbal alterations (*Laing*).

There is also, in the rich field of German romance, another edition of this story, which has been converted by M. Tieck (whose labors of that kind have been so remarkable) into the subject of one of his romantic dramas. It is, however, unnecessary to detail it, as the present Author adopted his idea of the tale chiefly from the edition preserved in the mansion of Haigh Hall, of old the mansion-house of the family of Bradshaigh, now possessed by their descendants on the female side, the Earls of Balcarras. The story greatly resembles that of the Noble Moringer, only there is no miracle of St. Thomas to shock the belief of good Protestants. I am permitted, by my noble friends, the lord and lady of Haigh Hall, to print the following extract from the family genealogy :—

Sir William Bradshaghe 2d Sone to Sr iohn was A great traueller and A Souldger and married To } Mabell daughter and Sole heire of Hugh Noris de Haghe and Blackrode and had issue EN. 8. E 2.

of this Mabel is a story by tradition of undouted berity that in Sr William Bradshage's absence (beinge 10 yeares away in the wares) she married a welsch kt. Sr William retorninge from the wares came in a Palmers habit amongst the Poore to haghe. Who when she saw & congetringe that he faboured her former husband wept, for which the kt chasticed her at wich Sr William went and made him selfe Knowne to his Tennants in wch space the kt fled. but neare to Newton Parke Sr William ouertooke him and slue him. The said Dame Mabell was enioyned by her confessor to doe Pennances by going onest euery week barefout and bare legg'd to a Crosse ner Wigan from the haghe wilest she liued & is called Mabb E to this day; & ther monument Lyes in wigan Church as you see ther Portrd

An: Dom: 1315.

There were many vestiges around Haigh Hall, both of the Catholic penances of the Lady Mabel and of this melancholy transaction in particular; the whole history was within the memory of man portrayed upon a glass window in the hall, where unfortunately it has not been preserved. Mab's Cross is still extant. An old decayed building is said to have been

the place where the Lady Mabel was condemned to render penance, by walking hither from Haigh Hall barefooted and barelegged for the performance of her devotions. This relic, to which an anecdote so curious is annexed, is now unfortunately ruinous. Time and whitewash, says Mr. Roby, have altogether defaced the effigies of the knight and lady on the tomb. The particulars are preserved in Mr. Roby's *Traditions of Lancashire*,* to which the reader is referred for further particulars. It does not appear that Sir William Bradshaigh was irreparably offended against the too hasty Lady Mabel, although he certainly showed himself of a more fiery mold than the Scottish and German barons who were heroes of the former tales. The tradition, which the Author knew very early in life, was told to him by the late Lady Balcarras. He was so much struck with it that, being at that time profuse of legendary lore, he inserted it in the shape of a note to *Waverley*,† the first of his romantic offenses. Had he then known, as he now does, the value of such a story, it is likely that, as directed in the inimitable receipt for making an epic poem, preserved in *The Guardian*, he would have kept it for some future opportunity.

As, however, the tale had not been completely told, and was a very interesting one, and as it was sufficiently interwoven with the crusades, the wars between the Welsh and the Norman lords of the marches were selected as a period when all freedoms might be taken with the strict truth of history without encountering any well-known fact which might render the narrative improbable. Perhaps, however, the period which vindicates the probability of the tale will, with its wars and murders, be best found described in the following passage of Gryffyth Ap Edwin's wars :—

This prince, in conjunction with Algar, Earl of Chester, who had been banished from England as a traitor, in the reign of Edward the Confessor, marched into Herefordshire and wasted all that fertile country with fire and sword, to revenge the death of his brother Rhees, whose head had been brought to Edward in pursuance of an order sent by that king on account of the depredations which he had committed against the English on the borders. To stop these ravages the Earl of Hereford, who was nephew to Edward, advanced with an army not of English alone, but of mercenary Normans and French, whom he had entertained in his service, against Gryffyth and Algar. He met them near Hereford,

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* A very elegant work, 2 vols. 1829 [and 2 vols. more, 1831]. By J. Roby, M.R.S.I.

† *Waverley*, Note 2, p. 470.

and offered them battle, which the Welsh monarch, who had won five pitched battles before, and never had fought without conquering, joyfully accepted. The earl had commanded his English forces to fight on horseback, in imitation of the Normans, against their usual custom; but the Welsh making a furious and desperate charge, that nobleman himself, and the foreign cavalry led by him, were so daunted at the view of them, that they shamefully fled without fighting; which being seen by the English, they also turned their backs on the enemy, who, having killed or wounded as many of them as they could come up with in their flight, entered triumphantly into Hereford, spoiled and fired the city, razed the walls to the ground, slaughtered some of the citizens, led many of them captive, and, to use the words of the Welsh chronicle, left nothing in the town but blood and ashes. After this exploit they immediately returned into Wales, undoubtedly from a desire of securing their prisoners and the rich plunder they had gained. The king of England hereupon commanded Earl Harold to collect a great army from all parts of the kingdom, and assembling them at Gloucester, advanced from thence to invade the dominions of Gryffyth in North Wales. He performed his orders, and penetrated into that country without resistance from the Welsh, Gryffyth and Algar returning into some parts of South Wales. What were their reasons for this conduct we are not well informed, nor why Harold did not pursue his advantage against them; but it appears that he thought it more advisable at this time to treat with, than subdue, them; for he left North Wales, and employed himself in rebuilding the walls of Hereford, while negotiations were carrying on with Gryffth, which soon after produced the restoration of Algar, and a peace with that king, not very honorable to England, as he made no satisfaction for the mischief he had done in the war, nor any submissions to Edward. Harold must doubtless have had some private and forcible motives to conclude such a treaty. The very next year the Welsh monarch, upon what quarrel we know not, made a new incursion into England, and killed the bishop of Hereford, the sheriff of the county, and many more of the English, both ecclesiastics and laymen. Edward was counselled by Harold and Leofrick, Earl of Mercia, to make peace with him again, which he again broke; nor could he be restrained by any means from these barbarous inroads before the year one thousand and sixty-three; when Edward, whose patience and pacific disposition had been too much abused, commissioned Harold to assemble the whole strength of the kingdom, and make war upon him in his own country, till he had subdued or destroyed him. That general acted so vigorously, and with so much celerity, that he had like to have surprised him in his palace; but just before the English forces arrived at his gate, having notice of the danger that threatened him, and seeing no other means of safety, he threw himself, with a few of his household, into one of his ships which happened at the instant to be ready to sail, and put to sea.—Lyttleton's [?] *Hist. of England*, vol. ii. p. 338.

This passage will be found to bear a general resemblance to the fictitious tale told in the romance.

MINUTES

OF SEDERUNT OF A GENERAL MEETING OF THE SHAREHOLDERS DESIGNING TO FORM A JOINT-STOCK COMPANY, UNITED FOR THE PURPOSE OF WRITING AND PUBLISHING THE CLASS OF WORKS CALLED THE WAVERLEY NOVELS,

HELD

IN THE WATERLOO TAVERN, REGENT'S BRIDGE,

Edinburgh, 1*st June*, 1825

The reader must have remarked, that the various editions of the proceedings at this meeting were given in the public papers with rather more than usual inaccuracy. The cause of this was no ill-timed delicacy on the part of the gentlemen of the press to assert their privilege of universal presence wherever a few are met together, and to commit to the public prints whatever may then and there pass of the most private nature. But very unusual and arbitrary methods were resorted to on the present occasion to prevent the reporters using a right which is generally conceded to them by almost all meetings, whether of a political or commercial description. Our own reporter, indeed, was bold enough to secrete himself under the secretary's table, and was not discovered till the meeting was wellnigh over. We are sorry to say he suffered much in person from fists and toes, and two or three principal pages were torn out of his note-book, which occasions his report to break off abruptly. We cannot but consider this behavior as more particularly illiberal on the part of men who are themselves a kind of gentlemen of the press; and they ought to consider themselves as fortunate that the misused reporter has sought no other vengeance than from the tone of acidity with which he has seasoned his account of their proceedings.—*Edinburgh Newspaper.*

A MEETING of the gentlemen and others interested in the celebrated publications called the Waverley Novels having been called by public advertisement, the same was respectably attended by various literary characters of eminence. And it being in the first place understood that individuals were to be denominated by the names assigned to them in the publications in question, the eidolon or image of the Author was unanimously called to the chair, and Jonathan Oldbuck, Esq., of Monkbarns was requested to act as secretary.

The Preses then addressed the meeting to the following purpose :—

"GENTLEMEN.—I need scarce remind you that we have a joint interest in the valuable property which has accumulated under our common labors. While the public have been idly engaged in ascribing to one individual or another the immense mass of various matter which the labors of many had accumulated, you, gentlemen, well know that every person in this numerous assembly has had his share in the honors and profits of our common success. It is, indeed, to me a mystery how the sharp-sighted could suppose so huge a mass of sense and nonsense, jest and earnest, humorous and pathetic, good, bad, and indifferent, amounting to scores of volumes, could be the work of one hand, when we know the doctrine so well laid down by the immortal Adam Smith concerning the division of labor. Were those who entertained an opinion so strange not wise enough to know that it requires twenty pairs of hands to make a thing so trifling as a pin, twenty couple of dogs to kill an animal so insignificant as a fox—— ?"

"Hout, man !" said a stout countryman, "I have a grew bitch at hame will worry the best tod in Pomoragrains before ye could say dumpling."

"Who is that person ?" said the Preses, with some warmth, as it appeared to us.

"A son of Dandy Dinmont's," answered the unabashed rustic. "God, ye may mind him, I think ! ane o' the best in your aught, I reckon. And, ye see, I am come into the farm, and maybe something mair, and a wheen shares in this buik-trade of yours."

"Well, well," replied the Preses, "peace, I pray thee—peace. Gentlemen, when thus interrupted, I was on the point of introducing the business of this meeting, being, as is known to most of you, the discussion of a proposition now on your table, which I myself had the honor to suggest at last meeting, namely, that we do apply to the legislature for an act of parliament in ordinary, to associate us into a corporate body, and give us a *persona standi in judicio,* with full power to prosecute and bring to conviction all encroachers upon our exclusive privilege, in the manner therein to be made and provided. In a letter from the ingenious Mr. Dousterswivel which I have received——"

Oldbuck (warmly)—"I object to that fellow's name being mentioned ; he is a common swindler."

"For shame, Mr. Oldbuck," said the Preses, "to use

such terms respecting the ingenious inventor of the great patent machine erected at Groningen, where they put in raw hemp at one end and take out ruffled shirts at the other, without the aid of hackle or rippling-comb, loom, shuttle, or weaver, scissors, needle, or seamstress. He had just completed it, by the addition of a piece of machinery to perform the work of the laundress ; but when it was exhibited before his honor the burgomaster, it had the inconvenience of heating the smoothing-irons red-hot ; excepting which, the experiment was entirely satisfactory. He will become as rich as a Jew."

"Well," added Mr. Oldbuck, "if the scoundrel——"

"Scoundrel, Mr. Oldbuck," said the Preses, "is a most unseemly expression, and I must call you to order. Mr. Dousterswivel is only an eccentric genius."

"Pretty much the same in the Greek," muttered Mr. Oldbuck ; and then said aloud, "And if this eccentric genius has work enough in singeing the Dutchman's linen, what the devil has he to do here ?"

"Why, he is of opinion that, at the expense of a little mechanism, some part of the labor of composing these novels might be saved by the use of steam."

There was a murmur of disapprobation at this proposal, and the words "Blown up," and "Bread taken out of our mouths," and "They might as well construct a steam parson," were whispered. And it was not without repeated calls to order that the Preses obtained an opportunity of resuming his address.

"Order !—order ! Pray, support the chair ! Hear—hear —hear the chair !"

"Gentlemen, it is to be premised that this mechanical operation can only apply to those parts of the narrative which are at present composed out of commonplaces, such as the love-speeches of the hero, the description of the heroine's person, the moral observations of all sorts, and the distribution of happiness at the conclusion of the piece. Mr. Dousterswivel has sent me some drawings, which go far to show that, by placing the words and phrases technically employed on these subjects in a sort of framework, like that of the sage of Laputa, and changing them by such a mechanical process as that by which weavers of damask alter their patterns, many new and happy combinations cannot fail to occur, while the author, tired of pumping his own brains, may have an agreeable relaxation in the use of his fingers."

"I speak for information, Mr. Preses," said the Rev. Mr.

Laurence Templeton; "but I am inclined to suppose the late publication of *Walladmor* * to have been the work of Dousterswivel, by the help of the steam-engine."

"For shame, Mr. Templeton," said the Preses; "there are good things in *Wolladmor*, I assure you, had the writer known anything about the country in which he laid the scene." †

"Or had he had the wit, like some of ourselves, to lay the scene in such a remote or distant country that nobody should be able to backspeir him," said Mr. Oldbuck.

"Why, as to that," said the Preses, "you must consider the thing was got up for the German market, where folks are no better judges of Welsh manners than of Welsh crw."

"I make it my prayer that this be not found the fault of our own next venture," said Dr. Dryasdust, pointing to some books which lay on the table. "I fear the manners expressed in that *Betrothed* of ours will scarce meet the approbation of the Cymmorodion; I could have wished that Llhuyd had been looked into, that Powell had been consulted, that Lewis's *History* had been quoted, the preliminary dissertations particularly, in order to give due weight to the work."

"Weight!" said Captain Clutterbuck; "by my soul, it is heavy enough already, Doctor."

"Speak to the chair," said the Preses, rather peevishly.

"To the chair, then, I say it," said Captain Clutterbuck, "that *The Betrothed* is heavy enough to break down the chair of John of Gaunt, or Cader-Edris itself. I must add, however, that, in my poor mind, *The Talisman* goes more trippingly off." ‡

"It is not for me to speak," said the worthy minister of St. Ronan's Well; "but yet I must say that, being so long engaged upon the siege of Ptolemais, my work ought to have been brought out, humble though it be, before any other upon a similar subject at least."

"Your siege, parson!" said Mr. Oldbuck, with great con-

* A romance, by the Author of *Waverley*, having been expected about this time at the great commercial mart of literature, the fair of Leipsic, an ingenious gentleman of Germany, finding that none such appeared, was so kind as to supply its place with a work, in three volumes called *Walladmor*, to which he prefixed the Christian and surname at full length. The character of this work is given with tolerable fairness in the text.]

† [See Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, vol. vii. pp. 384–386.]

‡ This was an opinion universally entertained among the friends of the Author.

tempt; "will you speak of your paltry prose-doings in my presence, whose great historical poem, in twenty books, with notes in proportion, has been postponed *ad Grae cas kalendas?*"

The Preses, who appeared to suffer a great deal during this discussion, now spoke with dignity and determination. "Gentlemen," he said, "this sort of discussion is highly irregular. There is a question before you, and to that, gentlemen, I must confine your attention. Priority of publication, let me remind you, gentlemen, is always referred to the committee of criticism, whose determination on such subjects is without appeal. I declare I will leave the chair if any more extraneous matter be introduced. And now, gentlemen, that we are once more in order, I would wish to have some gentleman speak upon the question, whether as associated to carry on a joint-stock trade in fictitious narrative, in prose and verse, we ought not to be incorporated by act of parliament? What say you, gentlemen, to the proposal? *Vis unita fortior* is an old and true adage."

"*Societas mater discordiarum* is a brocard as ancient and as veritable," said Oldbuck, who seemed determined, on this occasion, to be pleased with no proposal that was countenanced by the chair.

"Come, Monkbarns," said the Preses, in his most coaxing manner, "you have studied the monastic institutions deeply, and know there must be a union of persons and talents to do anything respectable, and attain a due ascendance over the spirit of the age. *Tres faciunt collegium:* it takes three monks to make a convent."

"And nine tailors to make a man," replied Oldbuck, not in the least softened in his opposition—"a quotation as much to the purpose as the other."

"Come—come," said the Preses, "you know the Prince of Orange said to Mr. Seymour, 'Without an association, we are a rope of sand.'"

"I know," replied Oldbuck, "it would have been as seemly that none of the old leaven had been displayed on this occasion, though you be the author of a Jacobite novel. I know nothing of the Prince of Orange after 1688; but I have heard a good deal of the immortal William the Third."

"And, to the best of my recollection," said Mr. Templeton, whispering Oldbuck, "it was Seymour made the remark to the Prince, not the Prince to Seymour. But this is a specimen of our friend's accuracy, poor gentleman. He

trusts too much to his memory of late years—failing fast, sir—breaking up!"

"And breaking down too," said Mr. Oldbuck. "But what can you expect of a man too fond of his own hasty and flashy compositions to take the assistance of men of reading and of solid parts?"

"No whispering—no caballing—no private business, gentlemen," said the unfortunate Preses, who reminded us somewhat of a Highland drover, engaged in gathering and keeping in the straight road his excursive black cattle.

"I have not yet heard," he continued, "a single reasonable objection to applying for the act of parliament, of which the draught lies on the table. You must be aware that the extremes of rude and of civilized society are, in these our days, on the point of approaching to each other. In the patriarchal period, a man is his own weaver, tailor, butcher, shoemaker, and so forth; and, in the age of stock-companies, as the present may be called, an individual may be said, in one sense, to exercise the same plurality of trades. In fact, a man who has dipped largely into these speculations may combine his own expenditure with the improvement of his own income, just like the ingenious hydraulic machine, which, by its very waste, raises its own supplies of water. Such a person buys his bread from his own Baking Company, his milk and cheese from his own Dairy Company, takes off a new coat for the benefit of his own Clothing Company, illuminates his house to advance his own Gas Establishment, and drinks an additional bottle of wine for the benefit of the General Wine Importation Company, of which he is himself a member. Every act, which would otherwise be one of mere extravagance, is, to such a person, seasoned with the *odor lucri* and reconciled to prudence. Even if the price of the article consumed be extravagant, and the quality indifferent, the person, who is in a manner his own customer, is only imposed upon for his own benefit. Nay, if the Joint-stock Company of Undertakers shall unite with the medical faculty, as proposed by the late facetious Doctor G——, under the firm of Death and the Doctor, the shareholder might contrive to secure to his heirs a handsome slice of his own death-bed and funeral expenses. In short, stock-companies are the fashion of the age, and an incorporating act will, I think, be particularly useful in bringing back the body over whom I have the honor to preside to a spirit of subordination, highly necessary to success in every enterprise where joint wisdom, talent, and labor are to be

employed. It is with regret that I state that, besides several differences amongst yourselves, I have not myself for some time been treated with that deference among you which circumstances entitled me to expect."

"*Hinc illæ lachrymæ,*" muttered Mr. Oldbuck.

"But," continued the Chairman, "I see other gentlemen impatient to deliver their opinions, and I desire to stand in no man's way. I therefore—my place in this chair forbidding me to originate the motion—beg some gentleman may move a committee for revising the draught of the bill now upon the table, and which has been duly circulated among those having interest, and taken the necessary measures to bring it before the House early next session."

There was a short murmur in the meeting, and at length Mr. Oldbuck again rose. "It seems, sir," he said, addressing the chair, "that no one present is willing to make the motion you point at. I am sorry no more qualified person has taken upon him to show any reasons in the contrair, and that it has fallen on me, as we Scotsmen say, to bell-the-cat with you; anent whilk phrase, Pitscottie hath a pleasant jest of the great Earl of Angus——"

Here a gentleman whispered to the speaker, "Have a care of Pitscottie!" and Mr. Oldbuck, as if taking the hint, went on.

"But that's neither here nor there. Well, gentlemen, to be short, I think it unnecessary to enter into the general reasonings whilk have this day been delivered, as I may say, *ex cathedra;* nor will I charge our worthy Preses with an attempt to obtain over us, *per ambages,* and under color of an act of parliament, a despotic authority, inconsistent with our freedom; but this I will say, that times are so much changed above stairs, that whereas last year you might have obtained an act incorporating a stock-company for riddling ashes, you will not be able to procure one this year for gathering pearls. What signifies, then, wasting the time of the meeting, by inquiring whether or not we ought to go in at a door which we know to be bolted and barred in our face, and in the face of all the companies for fire or air, land or water, which we have of late seen blighted?"

Here there was a general clamor, seemingly of approbation, in which the words might be distinguished, "Needless to think of it"—"Money thrown away"—"Lost before the committee," etc. etc. etc. But above the tumult, the voices of two gentlemen, in different corners of the room, answered each other clear and loud, like the blows of the two figures

on St. Dunstan's clock; and although the Chairman, in much agitation, endeavored to silence them, his interruption had only the effect of cutting their words up into syllables, thus—

First Voice. "The Lord Chan——"

Second Voice. "The Lord Lau——"

Chairman (loudly). "*Scandalum magnatum!*"

First Voice. "The Lord Chancel——"

Second Voice. "The Lord Lauder——"

Chairman (louder yet). "Breach of privilege!"

First Voice. "The Lord Chancellor——"

Second Voice. "My Lord Lauderdale——"

Chairman (at the highest pitch of his voice). "Called before the House!"

Both Voices together. "Will never consent to such a bill."

A general assent seemed to follow this last proposition, which was propounded with as much emphasis as could be contributed by the united clappers of the whole meeting, joined to those of the voices already mentioned.

Several persons present seemed to consider the business of the meeting as ended, and were beginning to handle their hats and canes, with a view to departure, when the Chairman, who had thrown himself back in his chair with an air of manifest mortification and displeasure, again drew himself up, and commanded attention. All stopped, though some shrugged their shoulders, as if under the predominating influence of what is called a "bore." But the tenor of his discourse soon excited anxious attention.

"I perceive, gentlemen," he said, "that you are like the young birds, who are impatient to leave their mother's nest; take care your own pin-feathers are strong enough to support you, since, as for my part, I am tired of supporting on my wing such a set of ungrateful gulls. But it signifies nothing speaking—I will no longer avail myself of such weak ministers as you: I will discard you—I will unbeget you, as Sir Anthony Absolute says—I will leave you and your whole hacked stock in trade—your caverns and your castles—your modern antiques and your antiquated moderns—your confusion of times, manners and circumstances—your properties, as player-folk say of scenery and dresses—the whole of your exhausted expedients, to the fools who choose to deal with them. I will vindicate my own fame with my own right hand, without appealing to such halting assistants,

Whom I have used for sport, rather than need.

I will lay my foundations better than on quicksands. I will rear my structure of better materials than painted cards; in a word, I will write HISTORY!"

There was a tumult of surprise, amid which our reporter detected the following expressions—"The devil you will!"—"You, my dear sir—*you?*"—"The old gentleman forgets that he is the greatest liar since Sir John Mandeville."

"Not the worse historian for that," said Oldbuck, "since history, you know, is half fiction."

"I'll answer for that half being forthcoming," said the former speaker; "but for the scantling of truth which is necessary after all, Lord help us! Geoffrey of Monmouth will be Lord Clarendon to him."

As the confusion began to abate, more than one member of the meeting was seen to touch his forehead significantly, while Captain Clutterbuck hummed,

> "Be by your friends advised,
> Too rash, too hasty, dad.
> Maugre your bolts and wise head,
> The world will think you mad."

"The world, and you, gentlemen, may think what you please," said the Chairman, elevating his voice; "but I intend to write the most wonderful book which the world ever read—a book in which every incident shall be incredible, yet strictly true—a work recalling recollections with which the ears of this generation once tingled, and which shall be read by our children with an admiration approaching to incredulity. Such shall be the LIFE OF NAPOLEON BONAPARTE, by the AUTHOR OF WAVERLEY!"

In the general start and exclamation which followed this annunciation, Mr. Oldbuck dropped his snuff-box; and the Scottish rappee, which dispersed itself in consequence, had effects upon the nasal organs of our reporter, ensconced as he was under the secretary's table, which occasioned his being discovered and extruded in the illiberal and unhandsome manner we have mentioned, with threats of farther damage to his nose, ears, and other portions of his body, on the part especially of Captain Clutterbuck. Undismayed by these threats, which indeed those of his profession are accustomed to hold at defiance, our young man hovered about the door of the tavern, but could only bring us the further intelligence, that the meeting had broken up in about a quarter of an hour after his expulsion, in much-admired disorder.

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THE BETROTHED

CHAPTER I

Now in these dayes were hotte wars upon the marches of Wales.
LEWIS'S *History*.

THE chronicles from which this narrative is extracted assure us that, during the long period when the Welsh princes maintained their independence, the year 1187 was peculiarly marked as favorable to peace betwixt them and their warlike neighbors, the Lords Marchers, who inhabited those formidable castles on the frontiers of the ancient British on the ruins of which the traveler gazes with wonder. This was the time when Baldwin, Archbishop of Canterbury, accompanied by the learned Giraldus de Barri, afterwards Bishop of St. David's, preached the Crusade from castle to castle, from town to town; awakened the inmost valleys of his native Cambria with the call to arms for recovery of the Holy Sepulcher; and, while he deprecated the feuds and wars of Christian men against each other, held out to the martial spirit of the age a general object of ambition, and a scene of adventure where the favor of Heaven, as well as of earthly renown, was to reward the successful champions.

Yet the British chieftains, among the thousands whom this spirit-stirring summons called from their native land to a distant and perilous expedition, had perhaps the best excuse for declining the summons. The superior skill of the Anglo-Norman knights, who were engaged in constant inroads on the Welsh frontier, and who were frequently detaching from it large portions, which they fortified with castles, thus making good what they had won, was avenged, indeed, but not compensated, by the furious inroads of the British, who, like the billows of a retiring tide, rolled on successively with noise, fury, and devastation; but, on each retreat, yielded ground insensibly to their invaders.

A union among the native princes might have opposed a

strong and permanent barrier to the encroachments of the strangers; but they were, unhappily, as much at discord among themselves as they were with the Normans, and were constantly engaged in private war with each other, of which the common enemy had the sole advantage.

The invitation to the Crusade promised something at least of novelty to a nation peculiarly ardent in their temper; and it was accepted by many, regardless of the consequences which must ensue to the country which they left defenseless. Even the most celebrated enemies of the Saxon and Norman race laid aside their enmity against the invaders of their country, to enroll themselves under the banners of the Crusade.

Amongst these was reckoned Gwenwyn (or more properly Gwenwynwen, though we retain the briefer appellative), a British prince exercising a precarious sovereignty over such parts of Powys Land as had not been subjugated by the Mortimers, Guarines, Latimers, FitzAlans and other Norman nobles, who, under various pretexts, and sometimes contemning all other save the open avowal of superior force, had severed and appropriated large portions of that once extensive and independent principality, which, when Wales was unhappily divided into three parts on the death of Roderick Mawr, fell to the lot of his youngest son, Mervyn. The undaunted resolution and stubborn ferocity of Gwenwyn, descendant of that prince, had long made him beloved among the "tall men," or champions, of Wales; and he was enabled, more by the number of those who served under him, attracted by his reputation, than by the natural strength of his dilapidated principality, to retaliate the encroachments of the English by the most wasteful inroads.

Yet even Gwenwyn on the present occasion seemed to forget his deeply-sworn hatred against his dangerous neighbors. The Torch of Pengwern, for so Gwenwyn, was called, from his frequently laying the province of Shrewsbury in conflagration, seemed at present to burn as calmly as a taper in the bower of a lady; and the Wolf of Plinlimmon, another name with which the bards had graced Gwenwyn, now slumbered as peacefully as the shepherd's dog on the domestic hearth.

But it was not alone the eloquence of Baldwin or of Girald which had lulled into peace a spirit so restless and fierce. It is true, their exhortations had done more towards it than Gwenwyn's followers had thought possible. The archbishop had induced the British chief to break bread, and to mingle in sylvan sports, with his nearest, and hitherto one of his most

determined, enemies, the old Norman warrior Sir Raymond Berenger, who, sometimes beaten, sometimes victorious, but never subdued, had, in spite of Gwenwyn's hottest incursion, maintained his Castle of Garde Dolorouse, upon the marches of Wales—a place, strong by nature and well fortified by art, which the Welsh prince had found it impossible to conquer, either by open force or by stratagem, and which, remaining with a strong garrison in his rear, often checked his incursions, by rendering his retreat precarious.

On this account, Gwenwyn of Powys Land had an hundred times vowed the death of Raymond Berenger and the demolition of his castle ; but the policy of the sagacious old warrior, and his long experience in all warlike practise, were such as, with the aid of his more powerful countrymen, enabled him to defy the attempts of his fiery neighbor. If there was a man, therefore, throughout England whom Gwenwyn hated more than another, it was Raymond Berenger ; and yet the good Archbishop Baldwin could prevail on the Welsh prince to meet him as a friend and ally in the cause of the Cross. He even invited Raymond to the autumn festivities of his Welsh palace, where the old knight, in all honorable courtesy, feasted and hunted for more than a week in the dominions of his hereditary foe.

To requite this hospitality, Raymond invited the Prince of Powys, with a chosen but limited train, during the ensuing Christmas, to the Garde Doloureuse, which some antiquaries have endeavored to identify with the Castle of Colune, on the river of the same name. But the length of time, and some geographical difficulties, throw doubts upon this ingenious conjecture.

As the Welshman crossed the drawbridge, he was observed by his faithful bard to shudder with involuntary emotion ; nor did Cadwallon, experienced as he was in life, and well acquainted with the character of his master, make any doubt that he was at that moment strongly urged by the apparent opportunity to seize upon the strong fortress which had been so long the object of his cupidity, even at the expense of violating his good faith.

Dreading lest the struggle of his master's conscience and his ambition should terminate unfavorably for his fame, the bard arrested his attention by whispering in their native language that " the teeth which bite hardest are those which are out of sight ;" and Gwenwyn, looking around him, became aware that, though only unarmed squires and pages appeared in the courtyard, yet the towers and battlements

connecting them were garnished with archers and men-at-arms.

They proceeded to the banquet, at which Gwenwyn, for the first time, beheld Eveline Berenger, the sole child of the Norman castellane, the inheritor of his domains and of his supposed wealth, aged only sixteen, and the most beautiful damsel upon the Welsh marches. Many a spear had already been shivered in maintenance of her charms; and the gallant Hugo de Lacy, Constable of Chester, one of the most redoubted warriors of the time, had laid at Eveline's feet the prize which his chivalry had gained in a great tournament held near that ancient town. Gwenwyn considered these triumphs as so many additional recommendations to Eveline; her beauty was incontestable, and she was heiress of the fortress which he so much longed to possess, and which he began now to think might be acquired by means more smooth than those with which he was in the use of working out his will.

Again, the hatred which subsisted between the British and their Saxon and Norman invaders, his long and ill-extinguished feud with this very Raymond Berenger, a general recollection that alliances between the Welsh and English had rarely been happy, and a consciousness that the measure which he meditated would be unpopular among his followers, and appear a dereliction of the systematic principles on which he had hitherto acted, restrained him from speaking his wishes to Raymond or his daughter. The idea of the rejection of his suit did not for a moment occur to him: he was convinced he had but to speak his wishes, and that the daughter of a Norman castellane, whose rank or power were not of the highest order among the nobles of the frontiers, must be delighted and honored by a proposal for allying his family with that of the sovereign of a hundred mountains.

There was indeed another objection, which in later times would have been of considerable weight—Gwenwyn was already married. But Brengwain was a childless bride; sovereigns, and among sovereigns the Welsh prince ranked himself, marry for lineage, and the Pope was not likely to be scrupulous where the question was to oblige a prince who had assumed the cross with such ready zeal, even although, in fact, his thoughts had been much more on the Garde Doloureuse than on Jerusalem. In the mean while, if Raymond Berenger, as was suspected, was not liberal enough in his opinions to permit Eveline to hold the temporary rank

of concubine, which the manners of Wales warranted Gwenwyn to offer as an interim arrangement, he had only to wait for a few months, and sue for a divorce through the Bishop of St. David's or some other intercessor at the Court of Rome.

Agitating these thoughts in his mind, Gwenwyn prolonged his residence at the castle of Berenger from Christmas till Twelfth Day; and endured the presence of the Norman cavaliers who resorted to Raymond's festal halls, although, regarding themselves, in virtue of their rank of knighthood, equal to the most potent sovereigns, they made small account of the long descent of the Welsh prince, who, in their eyes, was but the chief of a semi-barbarous province; while he, on his part, considered them little better than a sort of privileged robbers, and with the utmost difficulty restrained himself from manifesting his open hatred, when he beheld them careering in the exercises of chivalry, the habitual use of which rendered them such formidable enemies to his country. At length the term of feasting was ended, and the knight and squire departed from the castle, which once more assumed the aspect of a solitary and guarded frontier fort.

But the Prince of Powys Land, while pursuing his sports on his own mountains and valleys, found that even the abundance of the game, as well as his release from the society of the Norman chivalry, who affected to treat him as an equal, profited him nothing, so long as the light and beautiful form of Eveline, on her white palfrey, was banishied from the train of sportsmen. In short, he hesitated no longer, but took into his confidence his chaplain, an able and sagacious man, whose pride was flattered by his patron's communication, and who, besides, saw in the proposed scheme some contingent advantages for himself and his order. By his counsel the proceeding for Gwenwyn's divorce were prosecuted under favorable auspices, and the unfortunate Brengwain was removed to a nunnery, which, perhaps, she found a more cheerful habitation than the lonely retreat in which she had led a neglected life ever since Gwenwyn had despaired of her bed being blessed with issue. Father Einion also dealt with the chiefs and elders of the land, and represented to them the advantages which in future wars they were certain to obtain by the possession of the Garde Doloureuse, which had for more than a century covered and protected a considerable tract of country, rendered their advance difficult, and their retreat perilous, and, in a word, prevented their carrying their incursions as far as the gates of Shrewsbury. As for the

union with the Saxon damsel, the fetters which it was to form might not, the good father hinted, be found more permanent than those which had bound Gwenwyn to her predecessor, Brengwain.

These arguments, mingled with others adapted to the views and wishes of different individuals, were so prevailing, that the chaplain in the course of a few weeks was able to report to his princely patron that his proposed match would meet with no opposition from the elders and nobles of his dominions. A golden bracelet, six ounces in weight, was the instant reward of the priest's dexterity in negotiation, and he was appointed by Gwenwyn to commit to paper those proposals which he doubted not were to throw the Castle of Garde Doloureuse, notwithstanding its melancholy name, into an ecstacy of joy. With some difficulty the chaplain prevailed on his patron to say nothing in this letter upon his temporary plan of concubinage, which he wisely judged might be considered as an affront both by Eveline and her father. The matter of the divorce he represented as almost entirely settled, and wound up his letter with a moral application, in which were many illusions to Vashti, Esther, and Ahasuerus.

Having despatched this letter by a swift and trusty messenger, the British prince opened in all solemnity the feast of Easter, which had come round during the course of these *external* and *internal* negotiations.

Upon the approaching holy-tide, to propitiate the minds of his subjects and vassals, they were invited in large numbers to partake a princely festivity at Castell Coch, or the Red Castle, as it was then called, since better known by the name of Powys Castle, and in latter times the princely seat of the Duke of Beaufort. The architectural magnificence of this noble residence is of a much later period than that of Gwenwyn, whose palace, at the time we speak of, was a long, low-roofed edifice of red stone, whence the castle derived its name ; while a ditch and palisade were, in addition to the commanding situation, its most important defenses.

CHAPTER II

In Madoc's tent the clarion sounds,
  With rapid clangor hurried far;
Each hill and dale the note rebounds,
  But when return the sons of war?
Thou, born of stern necessity,
Dull peace! the valley yields to thee,
  And owns thy melancholy sway.

Welsh Poem.

THE feasts of the ancient British princes usually exhibited all the rude splendor and liberal indulgence of mountain hospitality, and Gwenwyn was, on the present occasion, anxious to purchase popularity by even an usual display of profusion; for he was sensible that the alliance which he meditated might indeed be tolerated, but could not be approved, by his subjects and followers.

The following incident, trifling in itself, confirmed his apprehensions. Passing one evening, when it was become nearly dark, by the open window of a guard-room, usually occupied by some few of his most celebrated soldiers, who relieved each other in watching his palace, he heard Morgan, a man distinguished for strength, courage, and ferocity, say to the companion with whom he was sitting by the watch-fire, "Gwenwyn is turned to a priest or a woman! When was it before these last months that a follower of his was obliged to gnaw the meat from the bone so closely as I am now peeling the morsel which I hold in my hand?" *

"Wait but a while," replied his comrade, "till the Norman match be accomplished; and so small will be the prey we shall then drive from the Saxon churls, that we may be glad to swallow, like hungry dogs, the very bones themselves."

Gwenwyn heard no more of their conversation; but this was enough to alarm his pride as a soldier and his jealousy as a prince. He was sensible that the people over whom he ruled were at once fickle in their disposition, impatient of long repose, and full of hatred against their neighbors; and he almost dreaded the consequences of the inactivity to

* See Taunt of Effeminacy. Note 1

which a long truce might reduce them. The risk was now incurred, however; and to display even more than his wonted splendor and liberality seemed the best way of reconciling the wavering affections of his subjects.

A Norman would have despised the barbarous magnificence of an entertainment consisting of kine and sheep roasted whole, of goats' flesh and deer's flesh seethed in the skins of the animals themselves; for the Normans piqued themselves on the quality rather than the quantity of their food, and, eating rather delicately than largely, ridiculed the coarser taste of the Britons, although the last were in their banquets much more moderate than were the Saxons; nor would the oceans of "crw" and hydromel, which overwhelmed the guests like a deluge, have made up, in their opinion, for the absence of the more elegant and costly beverage which they had learned to love in the south of Europe. Milk prepared in various ways was another material of the British entertainment which would not have received their approbation, although a nutriment which, on ordinary occasions, often supplied the want of all others among the ancient inhabitants, whose country was rich in flocks and herds, but poor in agricultural produce.

The banquet was spread in a long low hall, built of rough wood lined with shingles, having a fire at each end, the smoke of which, unable to find its way through the imperfect chimneys in the roof, rolled in cloudy billows above the heads of the revelers, who sat on low seats purposely to avoid its stifling fumes.* The mien and appearance of the company assembled was wild, and, even in their social hours, almost terrific. Their prince himself had the gigantic port and fiery eye fitted to sway an unruly people whose delight was in the field of battle; and the long mustachios which he and most of his champions wore added to the formidable dignity of his presence. Like most of those present, Gwenwyn was clad in a simple tunic of white linen cloth, a remnant of the dress which the Romans had introduced into provincial Britain; and he was distinguished by the *eudorchawg*,† or chain of twisted gold links, with which the Celtic tribes always decorated their chiefs. The collar, indeed, representing in form the species of links made by children out of rushes, was common to chieftains of inferior rank, many of whom bore it in virtue of their birth, or had won it by military exploits; but a ring of gold, bent around the

* See Welsh Houses. Note 2. † See Note 3.

head, intermingled with Gwenwyn's hair; for he claimed the rank of one of three diademed princes of Wales, and his armlets and anklets of the same metal were peculiar to the Prince of Powys, as an independent sovereign. Two squires of his body, who dedicated their whole attention to his service, stood at the Prince's back; and at his feet sat a page, whose duty it was to keep them warm by chafing and by wrapping them in his mantle. The same right of sovereignty which assigned to Gwenwyn his golden crownlet gave him a title to the attendance of the foot-bearer, or youth, who lay on the rushes, and whose duty it was to cherish the Prince's feet in his lap or bosom.*

Notwithstanding the military disposition of the guests, and the danger arising from the feuds into which they were divided, few of the feasters wore any defensive armor except the light goat-skin buckler, which hung behind each man's seat. On the other hand, they were well provided with offensive weapons; for the broad, sharp, short, two-edged sword was another legacy of the Romans. Most added a wood-knife or poniard; and there were store of javelins, darts, bows and arrows, pikes, halberds, Danish axes, and Welsh hooks and bills; so, in case of ill-blood arising during the banquet, there was no lack of weapons to work mischief.

But although the form of the feast was somewhat disorderly, and that the revelers were unrestrained by the stricter rules of good-breeding which the laws of chivalry imposed, the Easter banquet of Gwenwyn possessed, in the attendance of twelve eminent bards, one source of the most exalted pleasure in a much higher degree than the proud Normans could themselves boast. The latter, it is true, had their minstrels, a race of men trained to the profession of poetry, song, and music; but although those arts were highly honored, and the individual professors, when they attained to eminence, were often richly rewarded and treated with distinction, the order of minstrels, as such, was held in low esteem, being composed chiefly of worthless and dissolute strollers, by whom the art was assumed in order to escape from the necessity of labor, and to have the means of pursuing a wandering and dissipated course of life. Such, in all times, has been the censure upon the calling of those who dedicate themselves to the public amusement; among whom those distinguished by individual excellence are sometimes raised high in the social circle, while far the more numerous

* See Foot-pages. Note 4.

professors, who only reach mediocrity, are sunk into the lower scale. But such was not the case with the order of bards in Wales, who, succeeding to the dignity of the Druids, under whom they had originally formed a subordinate fraternity, had many immunities, were held in the highest reverence and esteem, and exercised much influence with their countrymen. Their power over the public mind even rivaled that of the priests themselves, to whom indeed they bore some resemblance ; for they never wore arms, were initiated into their order by secret and mystic solemnities, and homage was rendered to their *awen*, or flow of poetic inspiration, as if it had been indeed marked with a divine character. Thus possessed of power and consequence, the bards were not unwilling to exercise their privileges, and sometimes, in doing so, their manners frequently savored of caprice.

This was perhaps the case with Cadwallon, the chief bard of Gwenwyn, and who, as such, was expected to have poured forth the tide of song in the banqueting-hall of his prince. But neither the anxious and breathless expectation of the assembled chiefs and champions, neither the dead silence which stilled the roaring hall when his harp was reverently placed before him by his attendant, nor even the commands or entreaties of the Prince himself, could extract from Cadwallon more than a short and interrupted prelude upon the instrument, the notes of which arranged themselves into an air inexpressibly mournful, and died away in silence. The Prince frowned darkly on the bard, who was himself far too deeply lost in gloomy thought to offer any apology, or even to observe his displeasure. Again he touched a few wild notes, and, raising his looks upward, seemed to be on the very point of bursting forth into a tide of song similar to those with which this master of his art was wont to enchant his hearers. But the effort was in vain ; he declared that his right hand was withered, and pushed the instrument from him.

A murmur went round the company, and Gwenwyn read in their aspects that they received the unusual silence of Cadwallon on this high occasion as a bad omen. He called hastily on a young and ambitious bard named Caradoc of Menwygent, whose rising fame was likely soon to vie with the established reputation of Cadwallon, and summoned him to sing something which might command the applause of his sovereign and the gratitude of the company. The young man was ambitious, and understood the arts of a courtier. He commenced a poem, in which, although under a feigned

name, he drew such a poetic picture of Eveline Berenger that Gwenwyn was enraptured; and while all who had seen the beautiful original at once recognized the resemblance, the eyes of the Prince confessed at once his passion for the subject and his admiration of the poet. The figures of Celtic poetry, in themselves highly imaginative, were scarce sufficient for the enthusiasm of the ambitious bard, rising in his tone as he perceived the feelings which he was exciting. The praises of the Prince mingled with those of the Norman beauty; and "as a lion," said the poet, "can only be led by the hand of a chaste and beautiful maiden, so a chief can only acknowledge the empire of the most virtuous, the most lovely of her sex. Who asks of the noonday sun in what quarter of the world he was born? and who shall ask of such charms as hers to what country they owe their birth?"

Enthusiasts in pleasure as in war, and possessed of imaginations which answered readily to the summons of their poets, the Welsh chiefs and leaders united in acclamations of applause; and the song of the bard went farther to render popular the intended alliance of the Prince than had all the graver arguments of his priestly precursor in the same topic.

Gwenwyn himself, in a transport of delight, tore off the golden bracelets which he wore, to bestow them upon a bard whose song had produced an effect so desirable; and said, as he looked at the silent and sullen Cadwallon, "The silent harp was never strung with golden wires."

"Prince," answered the bard, whose pride was at least equal to that of Gwenwyn himself, "you pervert the proverb of Taliessin: it is the flattering harp which never lacked golden strings."

Gwenwyn, turning sternly towards him, was about to make an angry answer, when the sudden appearance of Jorworth, the messenger whom he had despatched to Raymond Berenger, arrested his purpose. This rude envoy entered the hall barelegged, excepting the sandals of goat-skin which he wore, and having on his shoulder a cloak of the same, and a short javelin in his hand. The dust on his garments and the flush on his brow showed with what hasty zeal his errand had been executed. Gwenwyn demanded of him eagerly, "What news from Garde Doloureuse, Jorworth ap Jevan?"

"I bear them in my bosom," said the son of Jevan; and, with much reverence, he delivered to the Prince a packet, bound with silk, and sealed with the impression of a swan, the ancient cognizance of the house of Berenger. Himself

ignorant of writing or reading, Gwenwyn, in anxious haste, delivered the letter to Cadwallon, who usually acted as secretary when the chaplain was not in presence, as chanced then to be the case. Cadwallon, looking at the letter, said briefly, "I read no Latin. Ill betide the Norman who writes to a Prince of Powys in other language than that of Britain! and well was the hour when that noble tongue alone was spoken from Tintadgel to Cairleon!"

Gwenwyn only replied to him with an angry glance.

"Where is Father Einion?" said the impatient prince.

"He assists in the church," replied one of his attendants, "for it is the feast of St. ——"

"Were it the feast of St. David," said Gwenwyn, "and were the pyx between his hands, he must come hither to me instantly!"

One of the chief henchmen sprung off to command his attendance, and, in the meantime, Gwenwyn eyed the letter containing the secret of his fate, but which it required an interpreter to read, with such eagerness and anxiety, that Caradoc, elated by his former success, threw in a few notes to divert, if possible, the tenor of his patron's thoughts during the interval. A light and lively air, touched by a hand which seemed to hesitate, like the submissive voice of an inferior fearing to interrupt his master's meditations, introduced a stanza or two applicable to the subject.

"And what though thou, O scroll," he said, apostrophizing the letter, which lay on the table before his master, "dost speak with the tongue of the stranger? Hath not the cuckoo a harsh note, and yet she tells us of green buds and springing flowers? What if thy language be that of the stoled priest, is it not the same which binds hearts and hands together at the altar? And what though thou delayest to render up thy treasures, are not all pleasures most sweet when enhanced by expectation? What were the chase, if the deer dropped at our feet the instant he started from the cover; or what value were there in the love of the maiden, were it yielded without coy delay?"

The song of the bard was here broken short by the entrance of the priest, who, hasty in obeying the summons of his impatient master, had not tarried to lay aside even the stole which he had worn in the holy service; and many of the elders thought it was no good omen that, so habited, a priest should appear in a festive assembly, and amid profane minstrelsy.

The priest opened the letter of the Norman baron, and,

struck with surprise at the contents, lifted his eyes in silence.

"Read it!" exclaimed the fierce Gwenwyn.

"So please you," replied the more prudent chaplain, "a smaller company were a fitter audience."

"Read it aloud!" repeated the Prince, in a still higher tone: "there sit none here who respect not the honor of their prince, or who deserve not his confidence. Read it, I say, aloud, and by St. David, if Raymond the Norman hath dared——"

He stopped short, and, reclining on his seat, composed himself to an attitude of attention; but it was easy for his followers to fill up the breach in his exclamation which prudence had recommended.

The voice of the chaplain was low and ill-assured as he read the following epistle:—

"Raymond Berenger, the noble Norman Knight, Seneschal of the Garde Doloureuse, to Gwenwyn, Prince of Powys—May peace be between them!—sendeth health.

"Your letter, craving the hand of our daughter Eveline Berenger, was safely delivered to us by your servant, Jorworth ap Jevan, and we thank you heartily for the good meaning therein expressed to us and to ours. But, considering within ourselves the difference of blood and lineage, with the impediments and causes of offense which have often arisen in the like cases, we hold it fitter to match our daughter among our own people; and this by no case in disparagement of you, but solely for the weal of you, of ourselves, and of our mutual dependants, who will be the more safe from the risk of quarrel betwixt us, that we essay not to draw the bonds of our intimacy more close than beseemeth. The sheep and the goats feed together in peace on the same pastures, but they mingle not in blood or race the one with the other. Moreover, our daughter Eveline hath been sought in marriage by a noble and potent Lord of the Marches, Hugo de Lacy, the Constable of Chester, to which most honorable suit we have returned a favorable answer. It is therefore impossible that we should in this matter grant to you the boon you seek; nevertheless, you shall at all times find us, in other matters, willing to pleasure you; and hereunto we call God, and Our Lady, and St. Mary Magdalene of Quatford to witness, to whose keeping we heartily recommend you.

"Written by our command, at our Castle of Garde Dolourreuse, within the Marches of Wales, by a reverend priest, Father Aldrovand, a black monk of the house of Wenlock; and to which we have appended our seal, upon the eve of the blessed martyr St. Alphegius, to whom be honor and glory!"

The voice of Father Einion faltered, and the scroll which he held in his hand trembled in his grasp, as he arrived at the conclusion of this epistle; for well he knew that insults more slight than Gwenwyn would hold the least word it contained were sure to put every drop of his British blood into the most vehement commotion. Nor did it fail to do so. The Prince had gradually drawn himself up from the posture of repose in which he had prepared to listen to the epistle; and when it concluded, he sprung on his feet like a startled lion, spurning from him as he rose the foot-bearer, who rolled at some distance on the floor. "Priest," he said, "hast thou read that accursed scroll fairly? for if thou hast added or diminished one word or one letter I will have thine eyes so handled that thou shalt never read letter more."

The monk replied, trembling, for he was well aware that the sacerdotal character was not uniformly respected among the irascible Welshmen, "By the oath of my order, mighty prince, I have read word for word and letter for letter."

There was a momentary pause, while the fury of Gwenwyn at this unexpected affront, offered to him in the presence of all his *uckelwyr* (*i. e.* noble chiefs, literally men of high stature), seemed too big for utterance, when the silence was broken by a few notes from the hitherto mute harp of Cadwallon. The Prince looked round at first with displeasure at the interruption, for he was himself about to speak; but when he beheld the bard bending over his harp with an air of inspiration, and blending together, with unexampled skill, the wildest and most exalted tones of his art, he himself became an auditor instead of a speaker, and Cadwallon, not the Prince, seemed to become the central point of the assembly, on whom all eyes were bent, and to whom each ear was turned with breathless eagerness, as if his strains were the responses of an oracle.

"We wed not with the stranger," thus burst the song from the lips of the poet. "Vortigern wedded with the stranger; thence came the first woe upon Britain, and a sword upon her nobles, and a thunderbolt upon her palace.

We wed not with the enslaved Saxon : the free and princely stag seeks not for his bride the heifer whose neck the yoke hath worn. We wed not with the rapacious Norman : the noble hound scorns to seek a mate from the herd of ravening wolves. When was it heard that the Cymry, the descendants of Brute, the true children of the soil of fair Britain, were plundered, oppressed, bereft of their birthright, and insulted even in their last retreats—when, but since they stretched their hand in friendship to the stranger, and clasped to their bosoms the daughter of the Saxon ? Which of the two is feared—the empty water-course of summer or the channel of the headlong winter torrent ? A maiden smiles at the summer-shrunk brook while she crosses it, but a barbed horse and his rider will fear to stem the wintry flood. Men of Mathravel and Powys, be the dreaded flood of winter ! Gwenwyn, son of Cyveiliock, may thy plume be the topmost of its waves !"

All thoughts of peace—thoughts which in themselves were foreign to the hearts of the warlike British—passed before the song of Cadwallon like dust before the whirlwind, and the unanimous shout of the assembly declared for instant war. The Prince himself spoke not, but, looking proudly around him, flung abroad his arm, as one who cheers his followers to the attack.

The priest, had he dared, might have reminded Gwenwyn that the cross which he had assumed on his shoulder had consecrated his arm to the Holy War, and precluded his engaging in any civil strife. But the task was too dangerous for Father Einion's courage, and he shrunk from the hall to the seclusion of his own convent. Caradoc, whose brief hour of popularity was passed, also retired, with humbled and dejected looks, and not without a glance of indignation at his triumphant rival, who had so judiciously reserved his display of art for the theme of war, that was ever most popular with the audience.

The chiefs resumed their seats no longer for the purpose of festivity, but to fix, in the hasty manner customary among these prompt warriors, where they were to assemble their forces, which, upon such occasions, comprehended almost all the able-bodied males of the country—for all, excepting the priests and the bards, were soldiers—and to settle the order of their descent upon the devoted marches, where they proposed to signalize, by general ravage, their sense of the insult which their prince had received, by the rejection of his suit.

CHAPTER III

The sands are number'd that make up my life;
Here must I stay, and here my life must end.
Henry VI. Act I. Scene IV.

WHEN Raymond Berenger had despatched his mission to the Prince of Powys, he was not unsuspicious, though altogether fearless, of the result. He sent messengers to the several dependants who held their fiefs by the tenure of "cornage," and warned them to be on the alert, that he might receive instant notice of the approach of the enemy. These vassals, as is well known, occupied the numerous towers which, like so many falcon-nests, had been built on the points most convenient to defend the frontiers, and were bound to give signal of any incursion of the Welsh, by blowing their horns; which sounds, answered from tower to tower and from station to station, gave the alarm for general defense. But although Raymond considered these precautions as necessary, from the fickle and precarious temper of his neighbors, and for maintaining his own credit as a soldier, he was far from believing the danger to be imminent; for the preparations of the Welsh, though on a much more extensive scale than had lately been usual, were as secret as their resolution of war had been suddenly adopted.

It was upon the second morning after the memorable festival of Castell Coch that the tempest broke on the Norman frontier. At first a single, long, and keen bugle-blast announced the approach of the enemy; presently the signals of alarm were echoed from every castle and tower on the borders of Shropshire, where every place of habitation was then a fortress. Beacons were lighted upon crags and eminences, the bells were rung backward in the churches and towns, while the general and earnest summons to arms announced an extremity of danger which even the inhabitants of that unsettled country had not hitherto experienced.

Amid this general alarm, Raymond Berenger, having busied himself in arranging his few but gallant followers and adherents, and taken such modes of procuring intelligence of the enemy's strength and motions as were in his power, at

length ascended the watch-tower of the castle, to observe in person the country around, already obscured in several places by the clouds of smoke which announced the progress and the ravages of the invaders. He was speedily joined by his favorite squire, to whom the unusual heaviness of his master's looks was cause of much surprise, for till now they had ever been blithest at the hour of battle. The squire held in his hand his master's helmet, for Sir Raymond was all armed saving the head.

"Dennis Morolt," said the veteran soldier, "are our vassals and liegemen all mustered?"

"All, noble sir, but the Flemings, who are not yet come in."

"The lazy hounds, why tarry they?" said Raymond. "Ill policy it is to plant such sluggish natures in our borders. They are like their own steers, fitter to tug a plow than for aught that requires mettle."

"With your favor," said Dennis, "the knaves can do good service notwithstanding. That Wilkin Flammock of the Green can strike like the hammers of his own fulling-mill."

"He will fight, I believe, when he cannot help it," said Raymond; "but he has no stomach for such exercise, and is as slow and as stubborn as a mule."

"And therefore are his countrymen rightly matched against the Welsh," replied Dennis Morolt, "that their solid and unyielding temper may be a fit foil to the fiery and headlong dispositions of our dangerous neighbors, just as restless waves are best opposed by steadfast rocks. Hark, sir, I hear Wilkin Flammock's step ascending the turret-stair as deliberately as ever monk mounted to matins."

Step by step the heavy sound approached, until the form of the huge and substantial Fleming at length issued from the turret-door to the platform where they were conversing. Wilkin Flammock was cased in bright armor, of unusual weight and thickness, and cleaned with exceeding care, which marked the neatness of his nation; but, contrary to the custom of the Normans, entirely plain, and void of carving, gilding, or any sort of ornament. The base-net, or steel-cap, had no visor, and left exposed a broad countenance, with heavy and unpliable features, which announced the character of his temper and understanding. He carried in his hand a heavy mace.

"So, Sir Fleming," said the castellane, "you are in no hurry, methinks, to repair to the rendezvous."

"So please you," answered the Fleming, "we were compelled to tarry, that we might load our wains with our bales of cloth and other property."

"Ha! wains! How many wains have you brought with you?"

"Six, noble sir," replied Wilkin.

"And how many men?" demanded Raymond Berenger.

"Twelve, valiant sir," answered Flammock.

"Only two men to each baggage-wain? I wonder you would thus encumber yourself," said Berenger.

"Under your favor, sir, once more," replied Wilkin, "it is only the value which I and my comrades set upon our goods that inclines us to defend them with our bodies; and, had we been obliged to leave our cloth to the plundering clutches of yonder vagabonds, I should have seen small policy in stopping here to give them the opportunity of adding murder to robbery. Gloucester should have been my first halting-place."

The Norman knight gazed on the Flemish artisan, for such was Wilkin Flammock, with such a mixture of surprise and contempt as excluded indignation. "I have heard much," he said, "but this is the first time that I have heard one with a beard on his lip avouch himself a coward."

"Nor do you hear it now," answered Flammock, with the utmost composure. "I am always ready to fight for life and property; and my coming to this country, where they are both in constant danger, shows that I care not mnch how often I do so. But a sound skin is better than a slashed one, for all that."

"Well," said Raymond Berenger, "fight after thine own fashion, so thou wilt but fight stoutly with that long body of thine. We are like to have need for all that we can do. Saw you aught of these rascaille Welsh? Have they Gwenwyn's banner amongst them?"

"I saw it with the white dragon displayed," replied Wilkin: "I could not but know it, since it was broidered in my own loom."

Raymond looked so grave upon this intelligence, that Dennis Morolt, unwilling the Fleming should mark it, thought it necessary to withdraw his attention. "I can tell thee," he said to Flammock, "that, when the Constable of Chester joins us with his lances, you shall see your handiwork, the dragon, fly faster homeward than ever flew the shuttle which wove it."

"It must fly before the Constable comes up, Dennis

Morolt," said Berenger, "else it will fly triumphant over all our bodies."

"In the name of God and the Holy Virgin!" said Dennis, "what may you mean, sir knight?—not that we should fight with the Welsh before the Constable joins us?" He paused, and then, well understanding the firm yet melancholy glance with which his master answered the question, he proceeded, with yet more vehement earnestness, "You cannot mean it—you cannot intend that we shall quit this castle, which we have so often made good against them, and contend in the field with two hundred men against thousands? Think better of it, my beloved master, and let not the rashness of your old age blemish that character for wisdom and warlike skill which your former life has so nobly won."

"I am not angry with you for blaming my purpose, Dennis," answered the Norman, "for I know you do it in love to me and mine. But, Dennis Morolt, this thing must be: we must fight the Welshmen within these three hours, or the name of Raymond Berenger must be blotted from the genealogy of his house."

"And so we will—we will fight them, my noble master," said the esquire; "fear not cold counsel from Dennis Morolt, where battle is the theme. But we will fight them under the walls of the castle, with honest Wilkin Flammock and his cross-bows on the wall to protect our flanks, and afford us some balance against the numerous odds."

"Not so, Dennis," answered his master—"in the open field we must fight them, or thy master must rank but as a man-sworn knight. Know, that when I feasted yonder wily savage in my halls at Christmas, and when the wine was flowing fastest around, Gwenwyn threw out some praises of the fastness and strength of my castle, in a manner which intimated it was these advantages alone that had secured me in former wars from defeat and captivity. I spoke in answer, when I had far better been silent; for what availed my idle boast, but as a fetter to bind me to a deed next to madness? 'If,' I said, 'a prince of the Cymry shall again come in hostile fashion before the Garde Doloureuse, let him pitch his standard down in yonder plain by the bridge, and, by the word of a good knight and the faith of a Christian man, Raymond Berenger will meet him as willingly, be he many or be he few, as ever Welshman was met withal.'"

Dennis was struck speechless when he heard of a promise

so rash, so fatal; but his was not the casuistry which could release his master from the fetters with which his unwary confidence had bound him. It was otherwise with Wilkin Flammock. He stared, he almost laughed, notwithstanding the reverence due to the castellane, and his own insensibility to risible emotions. "And is this all?" he said. "If your honor had pledged yourself to pay one hundred florins to a Jew or to a Lombard, no doubt you must have kept the day, or forfeited your pledge; but surely one day is as good as another to keep a promise for fighting, and that day is best in which the promiser is strongest. But indeed, after all, what signifies any promise over a wine flagon?"

"It signifies as much as a promise can do that is given elsewhere. The promiser," said Berenger, "escapes not the sin of a word-breaker because he hath been a drunken braggart."

"For the sin," said Dennis, "sure I am, that rather than you should do such deed of dole, the Abbot of Glastonbury would absolve you for a florin."

"But what shall wipe out the shame?" demanded Berenger. "How shall I dare to show myself again among press of knights, who have broken my word of battle, pledged for fear of a Welshman and his naked savages? No, Dennis Morolt, speak of it no more. Be it for weal or woe, we fight them to-day, and upon yonder fair field."

"It may be," said Flammock, "that Gwenwyn may have forgotten the promise, and so fail to appear to claim it in the appointed space; for, as we heard, your wines of France flooded his Welsh brains deeply."

"He again alluded to it on the morning after it was made," said the castellane; "trust me, he will not forget what will give him such a chance of removing me from his path forever."

As he spoke, they observed that large clouds of dust, which had been seen at different points of the landscape, were drawing down towards the opposite side of the river, over which an ancient bridge extended itself to the appointed place of combat. They were at no loss to conjecture the cause. It was evident that Gwenwyn, recalling the parties who had been engaged in partial devastation, was bending with his whole forces towards the bridge and the plain beyond it.

"Let us rush down and secure the pass," said Dennis Morolt; "we may debate with them with some equality by the advantage of defending the bridge. Your word bound

you to the plain as to a field of battle, but it did not oblige you to forego such advantages as the passage of the bridge would afford. Our men, our horses, are ready; let our bowmen secure the banks, and my life on the issue."

"When I promised to meet him in yonder field, I meant," replied Raymond Berenger, "to give the Welshman the full advantage of equality of ground. I so meant it, he so understood it; and what avails keeping my word in the letter, if I break it in the sense? We move not till the last Welshman has crossed the bridge; and then——"

"And then," said Dennis, "we move to our death! May God forgive our sins! But——"

"But what?" said Berenger; "something sticks in thy mind that should have vent."

"My young lady, your daughter the Lady Eveline——"

"I have told her what is to be. She shall remain in the castle, where I will leave a few chosen veterans, with you, Dennis, to command them. In twenty-four hours the siege will be relieved, and we have defended it longer with a slighter garrison. Then to her aunt, the abbess of the Benedic tine sisters; thou, Dennis, wilt see her placed there in honor and safety, and my sister will care for her future provision as her wisdom shall determine."

"*I* leave you at this pinch!" said Dennis Morolt, bursting into tears. "*I* shut myself up within walls when my master rides to his last of battles! *I* become squire to a lady, even though it be to the Lady Eveline, when he lies dead under his shield! Raymond Berenger, is it for this that I have buckled thy armor so often?"

The tears gushed from the old warrior's eyes as fast as from those of a girl who weeps for her lover; and Raymond, taking him kindly by the hand, said, in a soothing tone, "Do not think, my good old servant, that, were honor to be won, I would drive thee from my side. But this is a wild and an inconsiderate deed, to which my fate or my folly has bound me. I die to save my name from dishonor; but, alas! I must leave on my memory the charge of imprudence."

"Let me share your imprudence, my dearest master," said Dennis Morolt, earnestly: "the poor esquire has no business to be thought wiser than his master. In many a battle my valor derived some little fame from partaking in the deeds which won your renown; deny me not the right to share in that blame which your temerity may incur—let them not say that, so rash was his action, even his old esquire was not

permitted to partake in it! I am part of yourself: it is murder to every man whom you take with you, if you leave me behind."

"Dennis," said Berenger, "you make me feel yet more bitterly the folly I have yielded to. I would grant you the boon you ask, sad as it is, but my daughter——"

"Sir knight," said the Fleming, who had listened to this dialogue with somewhat less than his usual apathy, "it is not my purpose this day to leave this castle; now, if you could trust my troth to do what a plain man may for the protection of my Lady Eveline——"

"How, sirrah!" said Raymond; "you do not propose to leave the castle? Who gives you right to propose or dispose in the case, until my pleasure is known?"

"I shall be sorry to have words with you, sir castellane," said the imperturbable Fleming; "but I hold here, in this township, certain mills, tenements, cloth-yards, and so forth for which I am to pay man-service in defending this Castle of the Garde Doloureuse, and in this I am ready. But if you call on me to march from hence, leaving the same castle defenseless, and to offer up my life in a battle which you acknowledge to be desperate, I must needs say my tenure binds me not to obey thee."

"Base mechanic!" said Morolt, laying his hand on his dagger and menacing the Fleming.

But Raymond Berenger interfered with voice and hand. "Harm him not, Morolt, and blame him not. He hath a sense of duty, though not after our manner; and he and his knaves will fight best behind stone walls. They are taught also, these Flemings, by the practise of their own country, the attack and defense of walled cities and fortresses, and are especially skilful in working of mangonels and military engines. There are several of his countrymen in the castle, besides his own followers. These I propose to leave behind; and I think they will obey him more readily than any but myself—how think'st thou? Thou wouldst not, I know, from a misconstrued point of honor, or a blind love to me, leave this important place, and the safety of Eveline, in doubtful hands?"

"Wilkin Flammock is but a Flemish clown, noble sir," answered Dennis, as much overjoyed as if he had obtained some important advantage; "but I must needs say he is as stout and true as any whom you might trust; and, besides, his own shrewdness will teach him there is more to be gained by defending such a castle as this than by yielding it to

strangers, who may not be likely to keep the terms of surrender, however fairly they may offer them."

"It is fixed then," said Raymond Berenger. "Then, Dennis, thou shalt go with me, and he shall remain behind. Wilkin Flammock," he said, addressing the Fleming solemnly, "I speak not to thee the language of chivalry, of which thou knowest nothing; but, as thou art an honest man and a true Christian, I conjure thee to stand to the defense of this castle. Let no promise of the enemy draw thee to any base composition, no threat to any surrender. Relief must speedily arrive; if you fulfil your trust to me and to my daughter, Hugo de Lacy will reward you richly; if you fail, he will punish you severely."

"Sir knight," said Flammock, "I am pleased you have put your trust so far in a plain handicraftsman. For the Welsh, I am come from a land for which we were compelled—yearly compelled—to struggle with the sea; and they who can deal with the waves in a tempest need not fear an undisciplined people in their fury. Your daughter shall be as dear to me as mine own: and in that faith you may prick forth—if, indeed, you will not still, like a wiser man, shut gate, down portcullis, up drawbridge, and let your archers and my cross-bows man the wall, and tell the knaves you are not the fool that they take you for."

"Good fellow, that must not be," said the knight. "I hear my daughter's voice," he added, hastily; "I would not again meet her, again to part from her. To Heaven's keeping I commit thee, honest Fleming. Follow me, Dennis Morolt."

The old castellane descended the stair of the southern tower hastily, just as his daughter Eveline ascended that of the eastern turret to throw herself at his feet once more. She was followed by the Father Aldrovand, chaplain of her father; by an old and almost invalid huntsman, whose more active services in the field and the chase had been for some time chiefly limited to the superintendence of the knight's kennels, and the charge especially of his more favorite hounds; and by Rose Flammock, the daughter of Wilkin, a blue-eyed Flemish maiden, round, plump, and shy as a partridge, who had been for some time permitted to keep company with the high-born Norman damsel, in a doubtful station, betwixt that of an humble friend and superior domestic.

Eveline rushed upon the battlements, her hair dishevelled and her eyes drowned in tears, and eagerly demanded of the Fleming where her father was.

Flammock made a clumsy reverence, and attempted some answer; but his voice seemed to fail him. He turned his back upon Eveline without ceremony, and, totally disregarding the anxious inquiries of the huntsman and the chaplain, he said hastily to his daughter, in his own language, "Mad work!—mad work! look to the poor maiden, Roschen. *Der alter Herr ist verrückt.*"

Without further speech, he descended the stairs, and never paused till he reached the buttery. Here he called like a lion for the controller of these regions, by the various names of kammerer, keller-master, and so forth, to which the old Reinold, an ancient Norman esquire, answered not until the Netherlander fortunately recollected his Anglo-Norman title of butler. This, his regular name of office, was the key to the buttery-hatch, and the old man instantly appeared, with his gray cassock and high rolled hose, a ponderous bunch of keys suspended by a silver chain to his broad leathern girdle, which, in consideration of the emergency of the time, he had thought it right to balance on the left side with a huge falchion, which seemed much too weighty for his old arm to wield.

"What is your will," he said, "Master Flammock? or what are your commands, since it is my lord's pleasure that they shall be laws to me for a time?"

"Only a cup of wine, good Meister Keller-master—butler, I mean."

"I am glad you remember the name of mine office," said Reinold, with some of the petty resentment of a spoiled domestic, who thinks that a stranger has been irregularly put in command over him.

"A flagon of Rhenish, if you love me," answered the Fleming; "for my heart is low and poor within me, and I must needs drink of the best."

"And drink you shall," said Reinold, "if drink will give you the courage which perhaps you may want." He descended to the secret crypts of which he was the guardian, and returned with a silver flagon which might contain about a quart. "Here is such wine," said Reinold, "as thou hast seldom tasted," and was about to pour it out into a cup.

"Nay, the flagon—the flagon, friend Reinold: I love a deep and solemn draught when the business is weighty," said Wilkin. He seized on the flagon accordingly, and drinking a preparatory mouthful, paused as if to estimate the strength and flavor of the generous liquor. Apparently he was pleased with both, for he nodded in approbation to

the butler ; and, raising the flagon to his mouth once more, he slowly and gradually brought the bottom of the vessel parallel with the roof of the apartment, without suffering one drop of the contents to escape him.

"That hath savor, Herr Keller-master," said he, while he was recovering his breath by intervals, after so long a suspense of respiration ; "but, may Heaven forgive you for thinking it the best I have ever tasted ! You little know the cellars of Ghent and of Ypres."

"And I care not for them," said Reinold : "those of gentle Norman blood hold the wines of Gascony and France, generous, light, and cordial, worth all the acid potations of the Rhine and the Neckar."

"All is matter of taste," said the Fleming ; "but, harkye —is there much of this wine in the cellar ?"

"Methought but now it pleased not your dainty palate ?" said Reinold.

"Nay—nay, my friend," said Wilkin, "I said it had savor. I may have drunk better ; but this is right good, where better may not be had. Again, how much of it hast thou ?"

"The whole butt, man," answered the butler ; "I have broached a fresh piece for you."

"Good," replied Flammock ; "get the quart-pot of Christian measure ; heave the cask up into this same buttery, and let each soldier of this castle be served with such a cup as I have here swallowed. I feel it hath done me much good : my heart was sinking when I saw the black smoke arising from mine own fulling mills yonder. Let each man, I say, have a full quart-pot : men defend not castles on thin liquors."

"I must do as you will, good Wilkin Flammock," said the butler ; "but I pray remember all men are not alike. That which will but warm your Flemish hearts will put wildfire into Norman brains ; and what may only encourage your countrymen to man the walls will make ours fly over the battlements."

"Well, you know the conditions of your own countrymen best : serve out to them what wines and measure you list—only let each Fleming have a solemn quart of Rhenish. But what will you do for the English churls, of whom there are a right many left with us ?"

The old butler paused and rubbed his brow. "There will be a strange waste of liquor," he said ; "and yet I may not deny that the emergency may defend the expenditure. But

for the English, they are, as you wot, a mixed breed, having much of your German sullenness, together with a plentiful touch of the hot blood of yonder Welsh furies. Light wines stir them not ; strong, heavy draughts would madden them. What think you of ale—an invigorating, strengthening liquor, that warms the heart without inflaming the brain ?"

"Ale !" said the Fleming. "Hum — ha — is your ale mighty, sir butler ?—is it double ale ?"

"Do you doubt my skill ?" said the butler. "March and October have witnessed me ever as they came around, for thirty years, deal with the best barley in Shropshire. You shall judge."

He filled, from a large hogshead in the corner of the buttery, the flagon which the Fleming had just emptied, and which was no sooner replenished than Wilkin again drained it to the bottom.

"Good ware," he said, "Master Butler—strong, stinging ware. The English churls will fight like devils upon it ; let them be furnished with mighty ale along with their beef and brown bread. And now, having given you your charge, Master Reinold, it is time I should look after mine own."

Wilkin Flammock left the buttery, and with a mien and judgment alike undisturbed by the deep potations in which he had so recently indulged, undisturbed also by the various rumors concerning what was passing without doors, he made the round of the castle and its outworks, mustered the little garrison, and assigned to each their posts, reserving to his own countrymen the management of the arblasts, or cross-bows, and of the military engines which were contrived by the proud Normans, and were incomprehensible to the ignorant English, or, more properly, the Anglo-Saxons, of the period, but which his more adroit countrymen managed with great address. The jealousies entertained by both the Normans and English, at being placed under the temporary command of a Fleming, gradually yielded to the military and mechanical skill which he displayed, as well as to a sense of the emergency, which became greater with every moment.

CHAPTER IV

Beside yon brigg out ower yon burn,
  Where the water bickereth bright and sheen,
Shall many a falling courser spurn,
  And knights shall die in battle keen.
Prophecy of Thomas the Rhymer.

THE daughter of Raymond Berenger, with the attendants whom we have mentioned, continued to remain upon the battlements of the Garde Doloureuse, in spite of the exhortations of the priest that she would rather await the issue of this terrible interval in the chapel, and amid the rights of religion. He perceived, at length, that she was incapable, from grief and fear, of attending to or understanding his advice; and, sitting down beside her, while the huntsman and Rose Flammock stood by, endeavored to suggest such comfort as perhaps he scarcely felt himself.

"This is but a sally of your noble father's," he said; "and though it may seem it is made on great hazard, yet who ever questioned Sir Raymond Berenger's policy of wars? He is close and secret in his purposes. I guess right well he had not marched out as he proposes, unless he knew that the noble Earl of Arundel or the mighty Constable of Chester were close at hand."

"Think you this assuredly, good father? Go, Raoul—go, my dearest Rose—look to the East—see if you cannot descry banners or clouds of dust. Listen—listen—hear you no trumpets from that quarter?"

"Alas! my lady," said Raoul, "the thunder of heaven could scarce be heard amid the howling of yonder Welsh wolves." Eveline turned as he spoke, and, looking towards the bridge, she beheld an appalling spectacle.

The river, whose stream washes on three sides the base of the proud eminence on which the castle is situated, curves away from the fortress and its corresponding village on the west, and the hill sinks downward to an extensive plain, so extremely level as to indicate its alluvial origin. Lower down, at the extremity of this plain, where the banks again

close on the river, were situated the manufacturing houses of the stout Flemings, which were now burning in a bright flame. The bridge, a high, narrow combination of arches of unequal size, was about half a mile distant from the castle, in the very center of the plain. The river itself ran in a deep rocky channel, was often unfordable, and at all times difficult of passage, giving considerable advantage to the defenders of the castle, who had spent on other occasions many a dear drop of blood to defend the pass, which Raymond Berenger's fantastic scruples now induced him to abandon. The Welshman, seizing the opportunity with the avidity with which men grasp an unexpected benefit, were fast crowding over the high and steep arches, while new bands, collecting from different points upon the farther bank, increased the continued stream of warriors, who, passing leisurely and uninterrupted, formed their line of battle on the plain opposite to the castle.

At first father Aldrovand viewed their motions without anxiety, nay, with the scornful smile of one who observes an enemy in the act of falling into the snare spread for them by superior skill. Raymond Berenger, with his little body of infantry and cavalry, were drawn up on the easy hill which is betwixt the castle and the plain, ascending from the former towards the fortress; and it seemed clear to the Dominican, who had not entirely forgotten in the cloister his ancient military experience, that it was the knight's purpose to attack the disordered enemy when a certain number had crossed the river, and the others were partly on the farther side and partly engaged in the slow and perilous maneuver of effecting their passage. But when large bodies of the white-mantled Welshmen were permitted without interruption to take such order on the plain as their habits of fighting recommended, the monk's countenance, though he still endeavored to speak encouragement to the terrified Eveline, assumed a different and an anxious expression; and his acquired habits of resignation contended strenuously with his ancient military ardor. "Be patient," he said, "my daughter, and be of good comfort; thine eyes shall behold the dismay of yonder barbarous enemy. Let but a minute elapse, and thou shalt see them scattered like dust. St. George! they will surely cry thy name now, or never!"

The monk's beads passed meanwhile rapidly through his hands, but many an expression of military impatience mingled itself with his orisons. He could not conceive the cause why each successive throng of moun-

taineers, led under their different banners, and headed by their respective chieftains, was permitted, without interruption, to pass the difficult defile, and extend themselves in battle array on the near side of the bridge, while the English, or rather Anglo-Norman, cavalry remained stationary, without so much as laying their lances in rest. There remained, he thought, but one hope—one only rational explanation of this unaccountable inactivity—this voluntary surrender of every advantage of ground, when that of numbers was so tremendously on the side of the enemy. Father Aldrovand concluded that the succors of the Constable of Chester and other Lord Marchers must be in the immediate vicinity, and that the Welsh were only permitted to pass the river without opposition, that their retreat might be the more effectually cut off, and their defeat, with a deep river in their rear, rendered the more signally calamitous. But even while he clung to this hope, the monk's heart sunk within him, as, looking in every direction from which the expected succors might arrive, he could neither see nor hear the slightest token which announced their approach. In a frame of mind approaching more nearly to despair than to hope, the old man continued alternately to tell his beads, to gaze anxiously around, and to address some words of consolation in broken phrases to the young lady, until the general shout of the Welsh, ringing from the bank of the river to the battlements of the castle, warned him, in a note of exultation, that the very last of the British had defiled through the pass, and that their whole formidable array stood prompt for action upon the hither side of the river.

This thrilling and astounding clamor, to which each Welshman lent his voice with all the energy of defiance, thirst of battle, and hope of conquest, was at last answered by the blast of the Norman trumpets—the first sign of activity which had been exhibited on the part of Raymond Berenger. But cheerily as they rung, the trumpets, in comparison of the shout which they answered, sounded like the silver whistle of the stout boatswain amid the howling of the tempest.

At the same moment when the trumpets were blown, Berenger gave signal to the archers to discharge their arrows, and the men-at-arms to advance under a hailstorm of shafts, javelins and stones, shot, darted and slung by the Welsh against their steel-clad assailants.

The veterans of Raymond, on the other hand, stimulated by many victorious recollections, confident in the talents of

their accomplished leader, and undismayed even by the desperation of their circumstances, charged the mass of the Welshmen with their usual determined valor. It was a gallant sight to see this little body of cavalry advance to the onset, their plumes floating above their helmets, their lances in rest, and projecting six feet in length before the breasts of their coursers; their shields hanging from their necks, that their left hands might have freedom to guide their horses; and the whole body rushing on with an equal front, and a momentum of speed which increased with every second. Such an onset might have startled naked men (for such were the Welsh, in respect of the mail-sheathed Normans), but it brought no terrors to the ancient British, who had long made it their boast that they exposed their bare bosoms and white tunics to the lances and swords of the men-at-arms with as much confidence as if they had been born invulnerable. It was not indeed in their power to withstand the weight of the first shock, which, breaking their ranks, densely as they were arranged, carried the barbed horses into the very center of their host, and well-nigh up to the fatal standard to which Raymond Berenger, bound by his fatal vow, had that day conceded so much vantage-ground. But they yielded like the billows, which give way, indeed, to the gallant ship, but only to assail her sides, and to unite in her wake. With wild and horrible clamors, they closed their tumultuous ranks around Berenger and his devoted followers, and a deadly scene of strife ensued.

The best warriors of Wales had on this occasion joined the standard of Gwenwyn; the arrows of the men of Gwentland, whose skill in archery almost equaled that of the Normans themselves, rattled on the helmets of the men-at-arms; and the spears of the people of Deheubarth, renowned for the sharpness and temper of their steel heads, were employed against the cuirasses, not without fatal effect, notwithstanding the protection which these afforded to the rider.

It was in vain that the archery belonging to Raymond's little band—stout yeomen who, for the most part, held possessions by military tenure—exhausted their quivers on the broad mark afforded them by the Welsh army. It is probable that every shaft carried a Welshman's life on its point; yet, to have afforded important relief to the cavalry, now closely and inextricably engaged, the slaughter ought to have been twenty-fold at least. Meantime, the Welsh, galled

by this incessant discharge, answered it by volleys from their own archers, whose numbers made some amends for their inferiority, and who were supported by numerous bodies of darters and slingers. So that the Norman archers, who had more than once attempted to descend from their position to operate a diversion in favor of Raymond and his devoted band, were now so closely engaged in front as obliged them to abandon all thoughts of such a movement.

Meanwhile, that chivalrous leader, who from the first had hoped for no more than an honorable death, labored with all his power to render his fate signal by involving in it that of the Welsh prince, the author of the war. He cautiously avoided the expenditure of his strength by hewing among the British; but, with the shock of his managed horse, repelled the numbers who pressed on him, and leaving the plebeians to the swords of his companions, shouted his war-cry, and made his way towards the fatal standard of Gwenwyn, beside which, discharging at once the duties of a skilful leader and a brave soldier, the Prince had stationed himself. Raymond's experience of the Welsh disposition, subject equally to the highest flood and most sudden ebb of passion, gave him some hope that a successful attack upon this point, followed by the death or capture of the Prince and the downfall of his standard, might even yet strike such a panic as should change the fortunes of the day, otherwise so nearly desperate. The veteran, therefore, animated his comrades to the charge by voice and example; and, in spite of all opposition, forced his way gradually onward. But Gwenwyn in person, surrounded by his best and noblest champions, offered a defense as obstinate as the assault was intrepid. In vain they were borne to the earth by the barbed horses, or hewed down by the invulnerable riders. Wounded and overthrown, the Britons continued their resistance, clung round the legs of the Norman steeds and cumbered their advance; while their brethren, thrusting with pikes, proved every joint and crevice of the plate and mail, or, grappling with the men-at-arms, strove to pull them from their horses by main force, or beat them down with their bills and Welsh hooks. And woe betide those who were by these various means dismounted, for the long sharp knives worn by the Welsh soon pierced them with a hundred wounds, and were then only merciful when the first infliction was deadly.

The combat was at this point, and had raged for more

than half an hour, when Berenger, having forced his horse within two spears' length of the British standard, he and Gwenwyn were so near to each other as to exchange tokens of mutual defiance.

"Turn thee, Wolf of Wales," said Berenger, "and abide, if thou darest, one blow of a good knight's sword! Raymond Berenger spits at thee and thy banner."

"False Norman churl!" said Gwenwyn, swinging around his head a mace of prodigious weight, and already clotted with blood, "thy iron head-piece shall ill protect thy lying tongue, with which I will this day feed the ravens!"

Raymond made no farther answer, but pushed his horse towards the Prince, who advanced to meet him with equal readiness. But ere they came within reach of each other's weapons, a Welsh champion, devoted like the Romans who opposed the elephants of Pyrrhus, finding that the armor of Raymond's horse resisted the repeated thrusts of his spear, threw himself under the animal, and stabbed him in the belly with his long knife. The noble horse reared and fell, crushing with his weight the Briton who had wounded him; the helmet of the rider burst its clasps in the fall, and rolled away from his head, giving to view his noble features and gray hairs. He made more than one effort to extricate himself from the fallen horse, but, ere he could succeed, received his death's-wound from the hand of Gwenwyn, who hesitated not to strike him down with his mace while in the act of attempting to rise.

During the whole of this bloody day, Dennis Morolt's horse had kept pace for pace, and his arm blow for blow, with his master's. It seemed as if two different bodies had been moving under one act of volition. He husbanded his strength or put it forth exactly as he observed his knight did, and was close by his side when he made the last deadly effort. At that fatal moment when Raymond Berenger rushed on the chief, the brave squire forced his way up to the standard, and, grasping it firmly, struggled for possession of it with a gigantic Briton, to whose care it had been confided, and who now exerted his utmost strength to defend it. But, even while engaged in this mortal struggle, the eye of Morolt scarcely left his master; and when he saw him fall, his own force seemed by sympathy to abandon him, and the British champion had no longer any trouble in laying him prostrate among the slain.

The victory of the British was now complete. Upon the fall of their leader, the followers of Raymond Berenger would

willingly have fled or surrendered. But the first was impossible, so closely had they been enveloped ; and in the cruel wars maintained by the Welsh upon their frontiers quarter to the vanquished was out of question. A few of the men-at-arms were lucky enough to disentangle themselves from the tumult, and, not even attempting to enter the castle, fled in various directions, to carry their own fears among the inhabitants of the marches, by announcing the loss of the battle, and the fate of the far-renowned Raymond Berenger.

The archers of the fallen leader, as they had never been so deeply involved in the combat, which had been chiefly maintained by the cavalry, became now, in their turn, the sole object of the enemy's attack. But when they saw the multitude come roaring towards them like a sea with all its waves, they abandoned the bank which they had hitherto bravely defended, and began a regular retreat to the castle in the best order which they could, as the only remaining means of securing their lives. A few of their light-footed enemies attempted to intercept them, during the execution of this prudent maneuver, by outstripping them in their march, and throwing themselves into the hollow way which led to the castle, to oppose their retreat. But the coolness of the English archers, accustomed to extremities of every kind, supported them on the present occasion. While a part of them, armed with glaives and bills, dislodged the Welsh from the hollow way, the others, facing in the opposite direction, and parted into divisions, which alternately halted and retreated, maintained such a countenance as to check pursuit, and exchange a severe discharge of missiles with the Welsh, by which both parties were considerable sufferers.

At length, having left more than two-thirds of their brave companions behind, the yeomanry attained the point which, being commanded by arrows and engines from the battlements, might be considered as that of comparative safety. A volley of large stones and square-headed bolts of great size and thickness effectually stopped the farther progress of the pursuit, and those who had led it drew back their desultory forces to the plain, where, with shouts of jubilee and exultation, their countrymen were employed in securing the plunder of the field ; while some, impelled by hatred and revenge, mangled and mutilated the limbs of the dead Normans, in a manner unworthy of their national cause and their own courage. The fearful yells with which this dread-

ful work was consummated, while it struck horror into the minds of the slender garrison of the Garde Doloureuse, inspired them at the same time with the resolution rather to defend the fortress to the last extremity than to submit to the mercy of so vengeful an enemy.*

* See Courage of the Welsh. Note 5.

CHAPTER V

That baron he to his castle fled,
  To Barnard Castle then fled he;
The uttermost walls were eathe to win,
  The earls have won them speedilie.
The uttermost walls were stone and brick;
  But though they won them soon anon,
Long ere they won the inmost walls,
  For they were hewn in rock of stone.

PERCY'S *Relics of Ancient Poetry.*

THE unhappy fate of the battle was soon evident to the anxious spectators upon the watch-towers of the Garde Doloureuse, which name the castle that day too well deserved. With difficulty the confessor mastered his own emotions to control those of the females on whom he attended, and who were now joined in their lamentations by many others—women, children, and infirm old men, the relatives of those whom they saw engaged in this unavailing contest. These helpless beings had been admitted to the castle for security's sake, and they had now thronged to the battlements, from which Father Aldrovand found difficulty in making them descend, aware that the sight of them on the towers, that should have appeared lined with armed men, would be an additional encouragement to the exertions of the assailants. He urged the Lady Eveline to set an example to this group of helpless, yet untractable, mourners.

Preserving, at least endeavoring to preserve, even in the extremity of grief, that composure, which the manner of the times enjoined—for chivalry had its stoicism as well as philosophy—Eveline replied with a voice which she would fain have rendered firm, and which was tremulous in her despite —"Yes, father, you say well—here is no longer aught left for maidens to look upon. Warlike meed and honored deed sunk when yonder white plume touched the bloody ground. Come, maidens, there is no longer aught left us to see—to mass, to mass—the tourney is over."

There was wildness in her tone, and when she rose, with the air of one who would lead out a procession, she staggered, and would have fallen but for the support of the confessor.

Hastily wrapping her head in her mantle, as if ashamed of the agony of grief which she could not restrain, and of which her sobs and the low moaning sounds that issued from under the folds enveloping her face declared the excess, she suffered Father Aldrovand to conduct her whither he would.

"Our gold," he said, "has changed to brass, our silver to dross, our wisdom to folly; it is His will who confounds the counsels of the wise, and shortens the arm of the mighty. To the chapel—to the chapel, Lady Eveline; and instead of vain repining, let us pray to God and the saints to turn away their displeasure, and to save the feeble remnant from the jaws of the devouring wolf."

Thus speaking, he half led, half supported Eveline, who was at the moment, almost incapable of thought and action, to the castle-chapel, where, sinking before the altar, she assumed the attitude at least of devotion, though her thoughts despite the pious words which her tongue faltered out mechanically, were upon the field of battle, beside the body of her slaughtered parent. The rest of the mourners imitated their young lady in her devotional posture, and in the absence of her thoughts. The consciousness that so many of the garrison had been cut off in Raymond's incautious sally added to their sorrows the sense of personal insecurity, which were exaggerated by the cruelties which were too often exercised by the enemy, who, in the heat of victory, were accustomed to spare neither sex nor age.

The monk, however, assumed among them the tone of authority which his character warranted, rebuked their wailing and ineffectual complaints, and having, as he thought, brought them to such a state of mind as better became their condition, he left them to their private devotions, to indulge his own anxious curiosity by inquiring into the defenses of the castle. Upon the outward walls he found Wilkin Flammock, who, having done the office of a good and skilful captain in the mode of managing his artillery, and beating back, as we have already seen, the advanced guard of the enemy, was now with his own hand measuring out to his little garrison no stinted allowance of wine."

"Have a care, good Wilkin," said the father, "that thou dost not exceed in this matter. Wine is, thou knowest, like fire and water, an excellent servant, but a very bad master."

"It will be long ere it overflow the deep and solid skulls of my countrymen," said Wilkin Flammock. "Our Flemish courage is like our Flanders horses—the one needs the spur, and the other must have a taste of the wine-pot; but,

credit me, father, they are of an enduring generation, and will not shrink in the washing. But, indeed, if I were to give the knaves a cup more than enough, it were not altogether amiss, since they are like to have a platter the less."

"How do you mean?" cried the monk starting. "I trust in the saints the provisions have been cared for?"

"Not so well as in your convent, good father," replied Wilkin, with the same immovable stolidity of countenance. "We had kept, as you know, too jolly a Christmas to have a very fat Easter. Yon Welsh hounds, who helped to eat up our victuals, are now like to get into our hold for the lack of them."

"Thou talkest mere folly," answered the monk: "orders were last evening given by our lord—whose soul God assoilzie!—to fetch in the necessary supplies from the country around!"

"Ay, but the Welsh were too sharp set to permit us to do that at our ease this morning, which should have been done weeks and months since. Our lord deceased, if deceased he be, was one of those who trusted to the edge of the sword, and even so hath come of it. Commend me to a cross-bow and a well-victualed castle, if I must needs fight at all. You look pale, my good father, a cup of wine will revive you."

The monk motioned away from him the untasted cup which Wilkin pressed him to with clownish civility. "We have now, indeed," he said, "no refuge save in prayer!"

"Most true, good father," again replied the impassable Fleming; "pray therefore as much as you will. I will content myself with fasting, which will come whether I will or no." At this moment a horn was heard before the gate. "Look to the portcullis and the gate, you knaves! What news, Neil Hansen?"

"A messenger from the Welsh tarries at the mill-hill, just within shot of the cross-bows; he has a white flag and demands admittance."

"Admit him not, upon thy life, till we be prepared for him," said Wilkin. "Bend the bonny mangonel upon the place, and shoot him if he dare to stir from the spot where he stands till we get all prepared to receive him," said Flammock, in his native language. "And, Neil, thou hounds-foot, bestir thyself—let every pike, lance and pole in the castle be ranged along the battlements, and pointed through the shot-holes; cut up some tapestry into the shape of banners, and show them from the highest towers. Be ready, when I give a signal, to strike 'naker' and blow trumpets, if we have any; if not, some cow-horns—anything for a noise.

And harkye, Neil Hansen, do you and four or five of your fellows go to the armory and slip on coats of mail: our Netherlandish corslets do not appal them so much. Then let the Welsh thief be blindfolded and brought in amongst us. Do you hold up your heads and keep silence—leave me to deal with him—only have a care there be no English among us."

The monk, who in his travels had acquired some slight knowledge of the Flemish language, had wellnigh started when he heard the last article in Wilkin's instructions to his countryman, but commanded himself, although a little surprised, both at this suspicious circumstance and at the readiness and dexterity with which the rough-hewn Fleming seemed to adapt his preparations to the rules of war and of sound policy.

Wilkin, on his part, was not very certain whether the monk had not heard and understood more of what he said to his countryman than what he had intended. As if to lull asleep any suspicion which Father Aldrovand might entertain, he repeated to him in English most of the directions which he had given, adding, "Well, good father, what think you of it?"

"Excellent well," answered the father, "and done as you had practised war from the cradle, instead of weaving broadcloth."

"Nay, spare not your gibes, father," answered Wilkin. "I know full well that you English think that Flemings have nought in their brain-pan but sodden beef and cabbage; yet you see there goes wisdom to weaving of webs."

"Right, Master Wilkin Flammock," answered the father; "but, good Fleming, wilt thou tell me what answer thou wilt make to the Welsh prince's summons?"

"Reverend father, first tell me what the summons will be," replied the Fleming.

"To surrender this castle upon the instant," answered the monk. "What will be your reply?"

"My answer will be—'Nay, unless upon good composition.'"

"How, sir Fleming! dare you mention composition and the Castle of the Garde Doloureuse in one sentence?" exclaimed the monk.

"Not if I may do better," answered the Fleming. "But would your reverence have me dally until the question amongst the garrison be, whether a plump priest or a fat Fleming will be the better flesh to furnish their shambles?"

"Pshaw!" replied Father Aldrovand, "thou canst not mean such folly. Relief must arrive within twenty-four hours at farthest. Raymond Berenger expected it for certain within such a space."

"Raymond Berenger hath been deceived this morning in more matters than one," answered the Fleming.

"Hark thee, Flanderkin," answered the monk, whose retreat from the world had not altogether quenched his military habits and propensities, "I counsel thee to deal uprightly in this matter, as thou dost regard thine own life; for here are as many English left alive, notwithstanding the slaughter of the day, as may well suffice to fling the Flemish bull-frogs into the castle-ditch, should they have cause to think thou meanest falsely in the keeping of this castle and the defense of the Lady Eveline."

"Let not your reverence be moved with unnecessary and idle fears," replied Wilkin Flammock. "I am castellane in this house, by command of its lord, and what I hold for the advantage of mine service, that will I do."

"But I," said the angry monk—"I am the servant of the Pope—the chaplain of this castle, with power to bind and to unloose. I fear me thou art no true Christian, Wilkin Flammock, but dost lean to the heresy of the mountaineers. Thou hast refused to take the blessed cross; thou hast breakfasted, and drunk both ale and wine, ere thou hast heard mass. Thou art not to be trusted, man, and I will not trust thee; I demand to be present at the conference betwixt thee and the Welshman."

"It may not be, good father," said Wilkin, with the same smiling, heavy countenance which he maintained on all occasions of life, however urgent. "It is true, as thou sayest, good father, that I have mine own reasons for not marching quite so far as the gates of Jericho at present; and lucky I have such reasons, since I had not else been here to defend the gate of the Garde Doloureuse. It is also true that I may have been sometimes obliged to visit my mills earlier than the chaplain was called by his zeal to the altar, and that my stomach brooks not working ere I break my fast. But for this, father, I have paid a mulct even to your worshipful reverence, and methinks, since you are pleased to remember the confession so exactly, you should not forget the penance and the absolution."

The monk, in alluding to the secrets of the confessional, had gone a step beyond what the rules of his order and of the church permitted. He was baffled by the Fleming's

reply, and finding him unmoved by the charge of heresy, he could only answer in some confusion, "You refuse, then, to admit me to your conference with the Welshman?"

"Reverend father," said Wilkin, "it altogether respecteth secular matters. If aught of religious tenor should intervene, you shall be summoned without delay."

"I will be there in spite of thee, thou Flemish ox," muttered the monk to himself, but in a tone not to be heard by the bystanders; and so speaking, he left the battlements.

Wilkin Flammock, a few minutes afterwards, having first seen that all was arranged on the battlements, so as to give an imposing idea of the strength which did not exist, descended to a small guard-room, betwixt the outer and inner gate, where he was attended by half a dozen of his own people, disguised in the Norman armor which they had found in the armory of the castle—their strong, tall, and bulky forms and motionless postures causing them to look rather like trophies of some past age than living and existing soldiers. Surrounded by these huge and inanimate figures, in a little vaulted room which almost excluded daylight, Flammock received the Welsh envoy, who was led in blindfolded betwixt two Flemings, yet not so carefully watched but that they permitted him to have a glimpse of the preparations on the battlements, which had, in fact, been made chiefly for the purpose of imposing on him. For the same purpose an occasional clatter of arms was made without; voices were heard as if officers were going their rounds; and other sounds of active preparation seemed to announce that a numerous and regular garrison was preparing to receive an attack.

When the bandage was removed from Jorworth's eyes—for the same individual who had formerly brought Gwenwyn's offer of alliance now bare his summons of surrender—he looked haughtily around him, and demanded to whom he was to deliver the commands of his master, the Gwenwyn, son of Cyveiliock, Prince of Powys.

"His highness," answered Flammock, with his usual smiling indifference of manner, "must be contented to treat with Wilkin Flammock of the fulling-mills, deputed governor of the Garde Doloureuse."

"Thou deputed governor!" exclaimed Jorworth—"thou! a Low-Country weaver!—it is impossible. Low as they are, the English crogan cannot have sunk to a point so low as to be commanded by *thee!* These men seem English; to them I will deliver my message."

"You may if you will," replied Wilkin, "but if they return you any answer save by signs, you shall call me *schelm.*"

"Is this true?" said the Welsh envoy, looking towards the men-at-arms, as they seemed, by whom Flammock was attended—"are you really come to this pass? I thought that the mere having been born on British earth, though the children of spoilers and invaders, had inspired you with too much pride to brook the yoke of a base mechanic. Or, if you are not courageous, should you not be cautious? Well speaks the proverb, 'Woe to him that will trust a stranger!' Still mute—still silent? Answer me by word or sign. Do you really call and acknowledge him as your leader?"

The men in armor with one accord nodded their casques in reply to Jorworth's question, and then remained motionless as before.

The Welshman, with the acute genius of his country, suspected there was something in this which he could not entirely comprehend, but, preparing himself to be upon his guard, he proceeded as follows: "Be it as it may, I care not who hears the message of my sovereign, since it brings pardon and mercy to the inhabitants of this Castell an Carrig,* which you have called the Garde Doloureuse, to cover the usurpation of the territory by the change of the name. Upon surrender of the same to the Prince of Powys, with its dependencies, and with the arms which it contains, and with the maiden Eveline Berenger, all within the castle shall depart unmolested, and have safe-conduct wheresoever they will, to go beyond the marches of the Cymry."

"And how, if we obey not this summons?" said the imperturbable Wilkin Flammock.

"Then shall your portion be with Raymond Berenger, your late leader," replied Jorworth, his eyes, while he was speaking, glancing with the vindictive ferocity which dictated his answer. "So many strangers as be here amongst ye, so many bodies to the ravens, so many heads to the gibbet! It is long since the kites have had such a banquet of lurdane Flemings and false Saxons."

"Friend Jorworth," said Wilkin, "if such be thy only message, bear mine answer back to thy master, "That wise men trust not to the words of others that safety which they can secure by their own deeds. We have walls high and strong enough, deep moats, and plenty of munition, both

* Castle of the Craig.

long-bow and arblast. We will keep the castle, trusting the castle will keep us, till God shall send us succor."

"Do not peril your liyes on such an issue," said the Welsh emissary, changing his language to the Flemish, which, from occasional communication with those of that nation in Pembrokeshire, he spoke fluently, and which he now adopted, as if to conceal the purport of his discourse from the supposed English in the apartment. "Hark thee hither," he proceeded, "good Fleming. Knowest thou not that he in whom is your trust, the Constable De Lacy, hath bound himself by his vow to engage in no quarrel till he crosses the sea, and cannot come to your aid without perjury? He and the other Lords Marchers have drawn their forces far northward to join the host of Crusaders. What will it avail you to put us to the toil and trouble of a long siege, when you can hope no rescue?"

"And what will it avail me more," said Wilkin, answering in his native language, and looking at the Welshman fixedly, yet with a countenance from which all expression seemed studiously banished, and which exhibited, upon features otherwise tolerable, a remarkable compound of dulness and simplicity—"what will it avail me whether your trouble be great or small?"

"Come, friend Flammock," said the Welshman, "frame not thyself more unapprehensive than nature hath formed thee. The glen is dark, but a sunbeam can light the side of it. Thy utmost efforts cannot prevent the fall of this castle; but thou mayst hasten it, and the doing so shall avail thee much." Thus speaking, he drew close up to Wilkin, and sunk his voice to an insinuating whisper, as he said, "Never did the withdrawing of a bar or the raising of a portcullis bring such vantage to Fleming as they may to thee, if thou wilt."

"I only know," said Wilkin, "that the drawing the one and the dropping the other have cost me my whole worldly substance."

"Fleming, it shall be compensated to thee with an overflowing measure. The liberality of Gwenwyn is as the summer rain."

"My whole mills and buildings have been this morning burnt to the earth——"

"Thou shalt have a thousand marks of silver, man, in the place of thy goods," said the Welshman; but the Fleming continued, without seeming to hear him, to number up his losses.

"My lands are forayed, twenty kine driven off, and——"

"Threescore shall replace them," interrupted Jorworth, "chosen from the most bright-skinned of the spoil."

"But my daughter—but the Lady Eveline——" said the Fleming, with some slight change in his monotonous voice, which seemed to express doubt and perplexity. "You are cruel conquerors, and——"

"To those who resist us we are fearful," said Jorworth, "but not to such as shall deserve clemency by surrender. Gwenwyn will forget the contumelies of Raymond, and raise his daughter to high honor among the daughters of the Cymry. For thine own child, form but a wish for her advantage, and it shall be fulfilled to the uttermost. Now, Fleming, we understand each other."

"I understand thee, at least," said Flammock.

"And I thee, I trust?" said Jorworth, bending his keen, wild blue eye on the stolid and unexpressive face of the Netherlander, like an eager student who seeks to discover some hidden and mysterions meaning in a passage of a classic author, the direct import of which seems trite and trivial.

"You believe that you understand me," said Wilkin; "but here lies the difficulty—which of us shall trust the other?"

"Darest thou ask?" answered Jorworth. "Is it for thee or such as thee to express doubt of the purposes of the Prince of Powys?"

"I know them not, good Jorworth, but through thee; and well I wot thou art not one who will let thy traffic miscarry for want of aid from the breath of thy mouth."

"As I am a Christian man," said Jorworth, hurrying asseveration on asseveration—"by the soul of my father—by the faith of my mother—by the black rood of——"

"Stop, good Jorworth; thou heapest thine oaths too thickly on each other for me to value them to the right estimate," said Flammock: "that which is so lightly pledged is sometimes not thought worth redeeming. Some part of the promised guerdon in hand the whilst were worth an hundred oaths."

"Thou suspicious churl, darest thou doubt my word?"

"No, by no means," answered Wilkin; "ne'ertheless, I will believe thy deed more readily."

"To the point, Fleming," said Jorworth. "What wouldst thou have of me?"

"Let me have some present sight of the money thou didst promise, and I will think of the rest of thy proposal."

"Base silver-broker!" answered Jorworth, "thinkest

thou the Prince of Powys has as many money-bags as the merchants of thy land of sale and barter? He gathers treasures by his conquests, as the waterspout sucks up water by its strength; but it is to disperse them among his followers, as the cloudy column restores its contents to earth and ocean. The silver that I promise thee has yet to be gathered out of the Saxon chests—nay, the casket of Berenger himself must be ransacked to make up the tale."

"Methinks I could do that myself, having full power in the castle, and so save you a labor," said the Fleming.

"True," answered Jorworth, "but it would be at the expense of a cord and a noose, whether the Welsh took the place or the Normans relieved it: the one would expect their booty entire, the other their countryman's treasures to be delivered undiminished."

"I may not gainsay that," said the Fleming. "Well, say I were content to trust you thus far, why not return my cattle, which are in your own hands and at your disposal? If you do not pleasure me in something beforehand, what can I expect of you afterward?"

"I would pleasure you in a greater matter," answered the equally suspicious Welshman. "But what would it avail thee to have thy cattle within the fortress? They can be better cared for on the plain beneath."

"In faith," replied the Fleming, "thou sayst truth—they will be but a trouble to us here, where we have so many already provided for the use of the garrison. And yet, when I consider it more closely, we have enough of forage to maintain all we have, and more. Now, my cattle are of a peculiar stock, brought from the rich pastures of Flanders, and I desire to have them restored ere your axes and Welsh hooks be busy with their hides."

"You shall have them this night, hide and horn," said Jorworth; "it is but a small earnest of a great boon."

"Thanks to your munificence," said the Fleming; "I am a simple-minded man, and bound my wishes to the recovery of my own property."

"Thou wilt be ready, then, to deliver the castle?" said Jorworth.

"Of that we will talk farther to-morrow," said Wilkin Flammock; "if these English and Normans should suspect such a purpose, we should have wild work: they must be fully dispersed ere I can hold farther communication on the subject. Meanwhile, I pray thee, depart suddenly, and as if offended with the tenor of our discourse."

"Yet would I fain know something more fixed and absolute," said Jorworth.

"Impossible—impossible," said the Fleming; see you not yonder tall fellow begins already to handle his dagger. Go hence in haste, and angrily—and forget not the cattle."

"I will not forget them," said Jorworth; "but if thou keep not faith with us——"

So speaking, he left the apartment with a gesture of menace, partly really directed to Wilkin himself, partly assumed in consequence of his advice. Flammock replied in English, as if that all around might understand what he said—

"Do thy worst, sir Welshman! I am a true man; I defy the proposals of rendition, and will hold out this castle to thy shame and thy master's! Here—let him be blindfolded once more, and returned in safety to his attendants without; the next Welshman who appears before the gate of the Garde Doloureuse shall be more sharply received."

The Welshman was blindfolded and withdrawn, when, as Wilkin Flammock himself left the guard-room, one of the seeming men-at-arms who had been present at this interview said in his ear, in English, "Thou art a false traitor, Flammock, and shalt die a traitor's death!"

Startled at this, the Fleming would have questioned the man farther, but he had disappeared so soon as the words were uttered. Flammock was disconcerted by this circumstance, which showed him that his interview with Jorworth had been observed, and its purpose known or conjectured, by some one who was a stranger to his confidence, and might thwart his intentions; and he quickly after learned that this was the case.

CHAPTER VI

Blessed Mary, mother dear,
To a maiden bend thine ear
Virgin, undefiled, to thee
A wretched virgin bends the knee.
Hymn to the Virgin.

THE daughter of the slaughtered Raymond had descended from the elevated station whence she had beheld the field of battle, in the agony of grief natural to a child whose eyes have beheld the death of an honored and beloved father. But her station, and the principles of chivalry in which she had been trained up, did not permit any prolonged or needless indulgence of inactive sorrow. In raising the young and beautiful of the female sex to the rank of princesses, or rather goddesses, the spirit of that singular system exacted from them, in requital, a tone of character and a line of conduct superior, and something contradictory, to that of natural or merely human feeling. Its heroines frequently resembled portraits shown by an artificial light—strong and luminous, and which placed in high relief the objects on which it was turned; but having still something of adventitious splendor, which compared with that of the natural day, seemed glaring and exaggerated.

It was not permitted to the orphan of the Garde Doloureuse, the daughter of a line of heroes, whose stem was to be found in the race of Thor, Balder, Odin, and other deified warriors of the North, whose beauty was the theme of a hundred minstrels, and her eyes the leading star of half the chivalry of the warlike marches of Wales, to mourn her sire with the ineffectual tears of a village maiden. Young as she was, and horrible as was the incident which she had but that instant witnessed, it was not altogether so appalling to her as to a maiden whose eye had not been accustomed to the rough, and often fatal, sports of chivalry, and whose residence had not been among scenes and men where war and death had been the unceasing theme of every tongue, whose imagination had not been familiarized with wild and bloody events, or, finally, who had not been trained up to consider an honorable "death under shield," as that of a field of battle was

termed, as a more desirable termination to the life of a warrior than that lingering and unhonored fate which comes slowly on, to conclude the listless and helpless inactivity of prolonged old age. Eveline, while she wept for her father, felt her bosom glow when she recollected that he died in the blaze of his fame, and amidst heaps of his slaughtered enemies; and when she thought of the exigencies of her own situation, it was with the determination to defend her own liberty, and to avenge her father's death, by every means which Heaven had left within her power.

The aids of religion were not forgotten; and, according to the custom of the times and the doctrines of the Roman Church, she endeavored to propitiate the favor of Heaven by vows as well as prayers. In a small crypt, or oratory, adjoining to the chapel was hung over an altar-piece, on which a lamp constantly burned, a small picture of the Virgin Mary, revered as a household and peculiar deity by the family of Berenger, one of whose ancestors had brought it from the Holy Land, whither he had gone upon pilgrimage. It was of the period of the Lower Empire, a Grecian painting, not unlike those which in Catholic countries are often imputed to the Evangelist Luke. The crpyt in which it was placed was accounted a shrine of uncommon sanctity—nay, supposed to have displayed miraculous powers; and Eveline, by the daily garlands of flower which she offered before the painting, and by the constant prayers with which they were accompanied, had constituted herself the peculiar votress of Our Lady of the Garde Doloureuse, for so the picture was named.

Now, apart from others, alone, and in secrecy, sinking in the extremity of her sorrow before the shrine of her patroness, she besought the protection of kindred purity for the defense of her freedom and honor, and invoked vengeance on the wild and treacherous chieftain who had slain her father and was now beleaguering her place of strength. Not only did she vow a large donative in lands to the shrine of the protectress whose aid she implored, but the oath passed her lips (even though they faltered, and though something within her remonstrated against the vow), that whatsoever favored knight Our Lady of the Garde Doloureuse might employ for her rescue should obtain from her in guerdon whatever boon she might honorably grant, were it that of her virgin hand at the holy altar. Taught as she was to believe, by the assurances of many a knight, that such a surrender was the highest boon which Heaven could bestow, she felt as discharging a debt of gratitude when she placed herself

entirely at the disposal of the pure and blessed patroness in whose aid she confided. Perhaps there lurked in this devotion some earthly hope of which she was herself scarce conscious, and which reconciled her to the indefinite sacrifice thus freely offered. The Virgin (this flattering hope might insinuate), kindest and most benevolent of patronesses, will use compassionately the power resigned to her, and *he* will be the favored champion of Maria upon whom her votaress would most willingly confer favor.

But if there was such a hope, as something selfish will often mingle with our noblest and purest emotions, it arose unconscious of Eveline herself, who, in the full assurance of implicit faith, and fixing on the representative of her adoration eyes in which the most earnest supplication, the most humble confidence, struggled with unbidden tears, was perhaps more beautiful than when, young as she was, she was selected to bestow the prize of chivalry in the lists of Chester. It was no wonder that, in such a moment of high excitation, when prostrated in devotion before a being of whose power to protect her, and to make her protection assured by a visible sign, she doubted nothing, the Lady Eveline conceived she saw with her own eyes the acceptance of her vow. As she gazed on the picture with an overstrained eye, and an imagination heated with enthusiasm, the expression seemed to alter from the hard outlined fashioned by the Greek painter: the eyes appeared to become animated, and to return with looks of compassion the suppliant entreaties of the votaress; and the mouth visibly arranged itself into a smile of inexpressible sweetness. It even seemed to her that the head made a gentle inclination.

Overpowered by supernatural awe at appearances of which her faith permitted her not to question the reality, the Lady Eveline folded her arms on her bosom and prostrated her forehead on the pavement, as the posture most fitting to listen to divine communication.

But her vision went not so far: there was neither sound nor voice, and when, after stealing her eyes all around the crypt in which she knelt, she again raised them to the figure of Our Lady, the features seemed to be in the form in which the limner had sketched them, saving that, to Eveline's imagination, they still retained an august and yet gracious expression, which she had not before remarked upon the countenance. With awful reverence, almost amounting to fear, yet comforted and even elated with the visitation she had witnessed, the maiden repeated again and again the

orisons which she thought most grateful to the ear of her benefactress; and, rising at length, retired backwards, as from the presence of a sovereign, until she attained the outer chapel.

Here one or two females still knelt before the saints which the walls and niches presented for adoration; but the rest of the terrified suppliants, too anxious to prolong their devotions, had dispersed through the castle to learn tidings of their friends, and to obtain some refreshment, or at least some place of repose, for themselves and their families.

Bowing her head, and muttering an ave to each saint as she passed his image (for impending danger makes men observant of the rites of devotion), the Lady Eveline had almost reached the door of the chapel, when a man-at-arms, as he seemed, entered hastily; and with a louder voice than suited the holy place, unless when need was most urgent, demanded the Lady Eveline. Impressed with the feelings of veneration which the late scene had produced, she was about to rebuke his military rudeness, when he spoke again, and in anxious haste, "Daughter, we are betrayed!" and though the form, and the coat of mail which covered it, were those of a soldier, the voice was that of Father Aldrovand, who, eager and anxious at the same time, disengaged himself from the mail hood and showed his countenance.

"Father," she said, "what means this? Have you forgotten the confidence in Heaven which you are wont to recommend, that you bear other arms than your order assigns to you?"

"It may come to that ere long," said Father Aldrovand; "for I was a soldier ere I was a monk. But now I have donned this harness to discover treachery, not to assist force. Ah! my beloved daughter, we are dreadfully beset —foemen without—traitors within! The false Fleming, Wilkin Flammock, is treating for the surrender of the castle."

"Who dares say so?" said a veiled female, who had been kneeling unnoticed in a sequestered corner of the chapel, but who now started up and came boldly betwixt Lady Eveline and the monk.

"Go hence, thou saucy minion," said the monk, surprised at this bold interruption, "this concerns not thee."

"But it *doth* concern me," said the damsel, throwing back her veil, and discovering the juvenile countenance of Rose, the daughter of Wilkin Flammock, her eyes sparkling, and her cheeks blushing with anger, the vehemence of which

made a singular contrast with the very fair complexion and almost infantine features of the speaker, whose whole form and figure was that of a girl who has scarce emerged from childhood, and indeed whose general manners were as gentle and bashful as they now seemed bold, impassioned, and undaunted. "Doth it not concern me," she said, "that my father's honest name should be tainted with treason? Doth it not concern the stream when the fountain is troubled? It *doth* concern me, and I will know the author of the calumny."

"Damsel," said Eveline, "restrain thy useless passion; the good father, though he cannot intentionally calumniate thy father, speaks, it may be, from false report."

"As I am an unworthy priest," said the father, "I speak from the report of my own ears. Upon the oath of my order, myself heard this Wilkin Flammock chaffering with the Welshman for the surrender of the Garde Doloureuse. By help of this hauberk and mail hood, I gained admittance to a conference where he thought there were no English ears. They spoke Flemish too, but I knew the jargon of old."

"The Flemish," said the angry maiden, whose headstrong passion led her to speak first in answer to the last insult offered, "is no jargon like your piebald English, half Norman, half Saxon, but a noble Gothic tongue, spoken by the brave warriors who fought against the Roman kaisers, when Britain bent the neck to them. And as for this he has said of Wilkin Flammock," she continued, collecting her ideas into more order as she went on, "believe it not, my dearest lady; but as you value the honor of your own noble father, confide, as in the Evangelists, in the honesty of mine." This she spoke with an imploring tone of voice, mingled with sobs, as if her heart had been breaking.

Eveline endeavored to soothe her attendant. "Rose," she said, "in this evil time suspicions will light on the best men, and misunderstandings will arise among the best friends. Let us hear the good father state what he hath to charge upon your parent. Fear not but that Wilkin shall be heard in his defense. Thou wert wont to be quiet and reasonable."

"I am neither quiet nor reasonable on this matter," said Rose, with redoubled indignation; "and it is ill of you, lady, to listen to the falsehoods of that reverend mummer, who is neither true priest nor true soldier. But I will fetch one who shall confront him either in casque or cowl."

So saying, she went hastily out of the chapel, while the

monk, after some pedantic circumlocution, acquainted the Lady Eveline with what he had overheard betwixt Jorworth and Wilkin; and proposed to her to draw together the few English who were in the castle, and take possession of the innermost square tower—a keep which, as usual in Gothic fortresses of the Norman period, was situated so as to make considerable defense, even after the exterior works of the castle, which it commanded, were in the hand of the enemy.

"Father," said Eveline, still confident in the vision she had lately witnessed, "this were good counsel in extremity; but otherwise, it were to create the very evil we fear, by setting our garrison at odds amongst themselves. I have a strong, and not unwarranted, confidence, good father, in our blessed Lady of this Garde Douloureuse, that we shall attain at once vengeance on our barbarous enemies and escape from our present jeopardy; and I call you to witness the vow I have made, that to him whom Our Lady should employ to work us succor I will refuse nothing, were it my father's inheritance or the hand of his daughter."

"*Ave Maria! Ave Regina Cœli!*" said the priest; "on a rock more sure you could not have founded your trust. But, daughter," he continued, after the proper ejaculation had been made, "have you never heard, even by a hint, that there was a treaty for your hand betwixt our much honored lord, of whom we are cruelly bereft—may God assoilzie his soul!—and the great house of Lacy?"

"Something I may have heard," said Eveline, dropping her eyes, while a slight tinge suffused her cheek; "but I refer me to the disposal of Our Lady of Succor and Consolation."

As she spoke, Rose entered the chapel with the same vivacity she had shown in leaving it, leading by the hand her father, whose sluggish though firm step, vacant countenance, and heavy demeanor formed the strongest contrast to the rapidity of her motions, and the anxious animation of her address. Her task of dragging him forward might have reminded the spectator of some of those ancient monuments on which a small cherub, singularly inadequate to the task, is often represented as hoisting upward towards the empyrean the fleshly bulk of some ponderous tenant of the tomb, whose disproportioned weight bids fair to render ineffectual the benevolent and spirited exertions of its fluttering guide and assistant.

"Roschen—my child, what grieves thee?" said the Netherlander, as he yielded to his daughter's violence with

a smile, which, being on the countenance of a father, had more of expression and feeling than those which seemed to have made their constant dwelling upon his lips.

"Here stands my father," said the impatient maiden; "impeach him with treason, who can or dare? There stands Wilkin Flammock, son of Dieterick, the cramer of Antwerp; let those accuse him to his face who slandered him behind his back!"

"Speak, Father Aldrovand," said the Lady Eveline; "we are young in our lordship, and, alas! the duty hath descended upon us in an evil hour; yet we will, so may God and Our Lady help us, hear and judge of your accusation to the utmost of our power."

"This Wilkin Flammock," said the monk, "however bold he hath made himself in villainy, dares not deny that I heard him with my own ears treat for the surrender of the castle."

"Strike him, father!" said the indignant Rose—"strike the disguised mummer! The steel hauberk may be struck, though not the monk's frock—strike him, or tell him that he lies foully!"

"Peace, Roschen, thou art mad," said her father, angrily; "the monk hath more truth than sense about him, and I would his ears had been farther off when he thrust them into what concerned him not."

Rose's countenance fell when she heard her father bluntly avow the treasonable communication of which she had thought him incapable; she dropped the hand by which she had dragged him into the chapel, and stared on the Lady Eveline with eyes which seemed starting from their sockets, and a countenance from which the blood, with which it was so lately highly colored, had retreated to garrison the heart.

Eveline looked upon the culprit with a countenance in which sweetness and dignity were mingled with sorrow. "Wilkin," she said, "I could not have believed this. What! on the very day of thy confiding benefactor's death, canst thou have been tampering with his murderers, to deliver up the castle and betray thy trust?" But I will not upbraid thee. I deprive thee of the trust reposed in so unworthy a person, and appoint thee to be kept in ward in the western tower till God send us relief, when, it may be, thy daughter's merits shall atone for thy offenses, and save farther punishment. See that our commands be presently obeyed."

"Yes—yes—yes!" exclaimed Rose, hurrying one word on the other as fast and vehemently as she could articulate.

"Let us go—let us go to the darkest dungeon; darkness befits us better than light."

The monk, on the other hand, perceiving that the Fleming made no motion to obey the mandate of arrest, came forward, in a manner more suiting his ancient profession and present disguise than his spiritual character; and with the words, "I attach thee, Wilkin Flammock, of acknowledged treason to your liege lady," would have laid hand upon him, had not the Fleming stepped back and warned him off with a menacing and determined gesture, while he said—"Ye are mad!—all of you English are mad when the moon is full, and my silly girl hath caught the malady. Lady, your honored father gave me a charge, which I purpose to execute to the best for all parties, and you cannot, being a minor, deprive me of it at your idle pleasure. Father Aldrovand, a monk makes no lawful arrests. Daughter Roschen, hold your peace and dry your eyes—you are a fool."

"I am—I am," said Rose, drying her eyes and regaining her elasticity of manner—"I am indeed a fool, and worse than a fool, for a moment to doubt my father's probity. Confide in him, dearest lady; he is wise though he is grave, and kind though he is plain and homely in his speech. Should he prove false he will fare the worse! for I will plunge myself from the pinnacle of the Warder's Tower to the bottom of the moat, and he shall lose his own daughter for betraying his master's."

"This is all frenzy," said the monk. "Who trusts avowed traitors? Here, Normans—English, to the rescue of your liege lady. Bows and bills—bows and bills!"

"You may spare your throat for your next homily, good father," said the Netherlander "or call in good Flemish, since you understand it, for to no other language will those within hearing reply."

He then approached the Lady Eveline with a real or affected air of clumsy kindness, and something as nearly approaching to courtesy as his manners and features could assume. He bade her good-night, aud, assuring her that he would act for the best, left the chapel. The monk was about to break forth into revilings, but Eveline, with more prudence, checked his zeal.

"I cannot," she said, "but hope that this man's intentions are honest——"

"Now, God's blessings on you, lady, for that very word!" said Rose, eagerly interrupting her, and kissing her hand.

"But if unhappily they are doubtful," continued Eveline,

"it is not by reproach that we can bring him to a better purpose. Good father, give an eye to the preparations for resistance, and see nought omitted that our means furnish for the defense of the castle."

"Fear nothing, my dearest daughter," said Aldrovand: "there are still some English hearts amongst us, and we will rather kill and eat the Flemings themselves than surrender the castle."

"That were food as dangerous to come by as bear's venison, father," answered Rose, bitterly, still on fire with the idea that the monk treated her nation with suspicion and contumely.

On these terms they separated—the women to indulge their fears and sorrows in private grief, or alleviate them by private devotion; the monk to try to discover what were the the real purposes of Wilkin Flammock, and to counteract them if possible, should they seem to indicate treachery. His eye, however, though sharpened by strong suspicion, saw nothing to strengthen his fears, excepting that the Fleming had, with considerable military skill, placed the principal posts of the castle in the charge of his own countrymen, which must make any attempt to dispossess him of his present authority both difficult and dangerous. The monk at length retired, summoned by the duties of the evening service, and with the determination to be stirring with the light next morning.

CHAPTER VII

O, sadly shines the morning sun
On leaguer'd castle wall,
When bastion, tower, and battlement,
Seem nodding to their fall.

Old Ballad.

TRUE to his resolution, and telling his beads as he went, that he might lose no time, Father Aldrovand began his rouuds in the castle so soon as daylight had touched the top of the eastern horizon. A natural instinct led him first to those stalls which, had the fortress been properly victualled for a seige, ought to have been tenanted by cattle ; and great was his delight to see more than a score of fat kine and bullocks in the place which had last night been empty ! One of them had already been carried to the shambles, and a Fleming or two, who played butchers on the occasion, were dividing the carcass for the cook's use. The good father had well-nigh cried out, "A miracle !" but, not to be too precipitate, he limited his transport to a private exclamation in honor of Our Lady of the Garde Doloureuse.

"Who talks of lack of provender ?—who speaks of surrender now ?" he said. "Here is enough to maintain us till Hugo de Lacy arrives, were he to sail back from Cyprus to our relief. I did purpose to have fasted this morning, as well to save victuals as on a religious score ; but the the blessing of the saints must not be slighted. Sir cook, let me have half a yard* or so of broiled beef presently ; bid the pantler send me a manchet, and the butler a cup of wine. I will make a running breakfast on the western battlements."

At this place, which was rather the weakest point of the Garde Doloureuse, the good father found Wilkin Flammock anxiously superintending the necessary measures of defense. He greeted him courteously, congratulated him on the stock of provisions with which the castle had been supplied during the night, and was inquiring how they had been so happily introduced through the Welsh beseigers, when Wilkin took the first occasion to interrupt him.

* See Selling Meat by Measure. Note 6.

"Of all this another time, good father; but I wish at present, and before other discourse, to consult thee on a matter which presses my conscience, and moreover, deeply concerns my worldly estate."

"Speak on, my excellent son," said the father, conceiving that he should thus gain the key to Wilkin's real intentions. "O, a tender conscience is a jewel! and he that will not listen when it saith, "Pour out thy doubts into the ear of the priest," shall one day have his own dolorous outcries choked with fire and brimstone. Thou wert ever of a tender conscience, son Wilkin, though thou hast but a rough and borrel bearing."

"Well then," said Wilkin, "you are to know, good father, that I have had some dealings with my neighbor, Jan Vanwelt, concerning my daughter Rose, and that he has paid me certain guilders on condition I will match her to him."

"Pshaw—pshaw! my good son," said the disappointed confessor, "this gear can lie over: this is no time for marrying or giving in marriage, when we are all like to be murdered."

"Nay, but hear me, good father," said the Fleming, "for this point of conscience concerns the present case more nearly than you wot of. You must know I have no will to bestow Rose on this same Jan Vanwelt, who is old and of ill conditions; and I would know of you whether I may, in conscience, refuse him my consent?"

"Truly," said Father Aldrovand, "Rose is a pretty lass, though somewhat hasty; and I think you may honestly withdraw your consent, always on paying back the guilders you have received."

"But there lies the pinch, good father," said the Fleming: "the refunding this money will reduce me to utter poverty. The Welsh have destroyed my substance; and this handful of money is all, God help me! on which I must begin the world again."

"Nevertheless, son Wilkin," said Aldrovand, "thou must keep thy word, or pay the forfeit; for what saith the text? *Quis habitabit in tabernaculo, quis requiscet in monte sancto?* Who shall ascend to the tabernacle, and dwell in the holy mountain? Is it not answered again, *Qui jurat proximo, et non decipit*? Go to, my son—break not thy plighted word for a little filthy lucre; better is an empty stomach and a hungry heart with a clear conscience than a fatted ox with iniquity and word-breaking. Sawest thou not our late noble lord, who—may his soul be happy!—chose

rather to die in unequal battle, like a true knight, than live a perjured man, though he had but spoken a rash word to a Welshman over a wine-flask ?"

"Alas ! then," said the Fleming, "this is even what I feared ! We must e'en render up the castle, or restore to the Welshman, Jorworth, the cattle, by means of which I had schemed to victual and defend it."

"How—wherefore—what dost thou mean ?" said the monk in astonishment. "I speak to thee of Rose Flammock and Jan Van-devil, or whatever you call him, and you reply with talk about cattle and castles, and I wot not what !"

"So please you, holy father, I did but speak in parables. This castle was the daughter I had promised to deliver over, the Welshman is Jan Vanwelt, and the guilders were the cattle he has sent in, as a part-payment beforehand of my guerdon."

"Parables !" said the monk, coloring with anger at the trick put on him—"what has a boor like thee to do with parables ? But I forgive thee—I forgive thee."

"I am therefore to yield the castle to the Welshman, or restore him his cattle ?" said the impenetrable Dutchman.

"Sooner yield thy soul to Satan !" replied the monk.

"I fear me it must be the alternative," said the Fleming ; "for the example of thy honorable lord——"

"The example of an honorable fool," answered the monk ; then presently subjoined, "Our Lady be with her servant ! This Belgic-brained boor makes me forget what I would say."

"Nay, but the holy text which your reverence cited to me even now," continued the Fleming.

"Go to," said the monk ; "what hast thou to do to presume to think of texts ? Knowest thou not that the letter of the Scripture slayeth, and that it is the exposition which maketh to live ? Art thou not like one who, coming to a physician, conceals from him half the symptoms of the disease ? I tell thee, thou foolish Fleming, the text speaketh but of promises made unto Christians, and there is in the rubric a special exception of such as are made to Welshmen." At this commentary the Fleming grinned so broadly as to show his whole case of broad strong white teeth. Father Aldrovand himself grinned in sympathy, and then proceeded to say, "Come—come, I see how it is. Thou hast studied some small revenge on me for doubting of thy truth ; and, in verity, I think thou hast taken it wittily

enough. But wherefore didst thou not let me into the secret from the beginning? I promise thee I had foul suspicions of thee."

"What!" said the Fleming, "is it possible I could ever think of involving your reverence in a little matter of deceit? Surely Heaven hath sent me more grace and manners. Hark, I hear Jorworth's horn at the gate."

"He blows like a town swineherd," said Aldrovand, in disdain.

"It is not your reverence's pleasure that I should restore the cattle unto him, then?" said Flammock.

"Yes, thus far. Prithee deliver him straightway over the walls such a tub of boiling water as shall scald the hair from his goat-skin cloak. And, hark thee, do thou in the first place try the temperature of the kettle with thy forefinger, and that shall be thy penance for the trick thou hast played me."

The Fleming answered this with another broad grin of intelligence, and they proceeded to the outer gate, to which Jorworth had come alone. Placing himself at the wicket, which, however, he kept carefully barred, and speaking through a small opening, contrived for such purpose, Wilkin Flammock demanded of the Welshman his business.

"To receive rendition of the castle, agreeable to promise," said Jorworth.

"Ay? and art thou come on such an errand alone?" said Wilkin.

"No, truly," answered Jorworth; "I have some twoscore of men concealed among yonder bushes."

"Then thou hadst best lead them away quickly," answered Wilkin, "before our archers let fly a sheaf of arrows among them."

"How, villain! Dost thou not mean to keep thy promise? said the Welshman.

"I gave thee none," said the Fleming: "I promised but to think on what thou didst say. I have done so, and have communicated with my ghostly father, who will in no respect hear of my listening to thy proposal."

"And wilt thou," said Jorworth, "keep the cattle, which I simply sent in to the castle on the faith of our agreement?"

"I will excommunicate and deliver him over to Satan," said the monk, unable to wait the phlegmatic and lingering answer of the Fleming, "if he give horn, hoof, or hair of them to such an uncircumcised Philistine as thou or thy master."

"It is well, shorn priest," answered Jorworth, in great ınger. "But mark me—reckon not on your frock for ran-om. When Gwenwyn hath taken this castle, as it shall not onger shelter such a pair of faithless traitors, I will have ou sewed up each into the carcass of one of these kine, for vhich your penitent has forsworn himself, aud lay you where volf and eagle shall be your only companions."

"Thou wilt work thy will when it is matched with thy ower," said the sedate Netherlander.

"False Welshman, we defy thee to thy teeth!" answered, n the same breath, the more irascible monk. "I trust to ee the hounds gnaw thy joints ere that day come that ye talk f so proudly."

By way of answer to both, Jorworth drew back his arm vith his leveled javelin, and shaking the shaft till it acquired vibratory motion, he hurled it with equal strength and lexterity right against the aperture in the wicket. It vhizzed through the opening at which it was aimed, and lew—harmlessly, however—between the heads of the monk nd the Fleming; the former of whom started back, while he latter only said, as he looked at the javelin, which stood uivering in the door of the guard-room, "That was well imed, and happily balked."

Jorworth, the instant he had flung his dart, hastened to he ambush which he had prepared, and gave them at once he signal and the example of a rapid retreat down the hill. Father Aldrovand would willingly have followed them with volley of arrows, but the Fleming observed that ammuni-ion was too precious with them to be wasted on a few unaways. Perhaps the honest man remembered that they ad come within the danger of such a salutation, in some neasure, on his own assurance.

When the noise of the hasty retreat of Jorworth and his ollowers had died away, there ensued a dead silence, well orresponding with the coolness and calmness of that early our in the morning.

"This will not last long," said Wilkin to the monk, in a one of foreboding seriousness, which found an echo in the ood father's bosom.

"It will not, and it cannot," answered Aldrovand; "and ve must expect a shrewd attack, which I should mind little, ut that their numbers are great, ours few, the extent of he walls considerable, and the obstinacy of these Welsh iends almost equal to their fury. But we will do the best. I will to the Lady Eveline. She must show herself upon

the battlements. She is fairer in feature than becometh a man of my order to speak of; and she has withal a breathing of her father's lofty spirit. The look and the word of such a lady will give a man double strength in the hour of need."

"It may be," said the Fleming; "and I will go see that the good breakfast which I have appointed be presently served forth; it will give my Flemings more strength than the sight of the ten thousand virgins—may their help be with us!—were they all arranged on a fair field."

CHAPTER VIII

'Twas when ye raised, 'mid sap and siege,
The banner of your rightful liege
At your she captain's call,
Who, miracle of womankind,
Lent mettle to the meanest hind
That mann'd her castle wall.

WILLIAM STEWART ROSE.

THE morning light was scarce fully spread abroad when Eveline Berenger, in compliance with her confessor's advice, commenced her progress around the walls and battlements of the beleaguered castle, to confirm by her personal entreaties the minds of the valiant, and to rouse the more timid to hope and to exertion. She wore a rich collar and bracelets, as ornaments which indicated her rank and high descent; and her under tunic, in the manner of the times, was gathered around her slender waist by a girdle, embroidered with precious stones, and secured by a large buckle of gold. From one side of the girdle was suspended a pouch or purse, splendidly adorned with needlework, and on the left side it sustained a small dagger of exquisite workmanship. A dark-colored mantle, chosen as emblematic of her clouded fortunes, was flung loosely around her; and its hood was brought forward so as to shadow, but not hide, her beautiful countenance. Her looks had lost the high and ecstatic expression which had been inspired by supposed revelation, but they retained a sorrowful and mild, yet determined, character; and, in addressing the soldiers, she used a mixture of entreaty and command—now throwing herself upon their protection, now demanding in her aid the just tribute of their allegiance.

The garrison was divided, as military skill dictated, in groups, on the points most liable to attack, or from which an assailing enemy might be best annoyed; and it was this unavoidable separation of their force into small detachments which showed to disadvantage the extent of walls, compared with the number of the defenders; and though Wilkin Flammock had contrived several means of concealing this deficiency of force from the enemy, he could not disguise it from the defenders of the castle, who cast mournful glances

on the length of battlements which were unoccupied save by sentinels, and then looked out to the fatal field of battle, loaded with the bodies of those who ought to have been their comrades in this hour of peril.

The presence of Eveline did much to rouse the garrison from this state of discouragement. She glided from post to post, from tower to tower of the old gray fortress, as a gleam of light passes over a clouded landscape, and, touching its various points in succession, calls them out to beauty and effect. Sorrow and fear sometimes makes sufferers eloquent. She addressed the various nations who composed her little garrison, each in appropriate language. To the English, she spoke as children of the soil; to the Flemings, as men who had become denizens by the right of hospitality; to the Normaus, as descendants of that victorious race whose swords had made them the nobles and sovereigns of every land where its edge had been tried. To them she used the language of chivalry, by whose rules the meanest of that nation regulated, or affected to regulate, his actions; the English she reminded of their good faith and honesty of heart; and to the Flemings she spoke of the destruction of their property, the fruits of their honest industry. To all she proposed vengeance for the death of their leader and his followers; to all she recommended confidence in God and Our Lady of the Garde Doloureuse; and she ventured to assure all of the strong and victorious bands that were already in march to their relief.

"Will the gallant champions of the cross," she said, "think of leaving their native land, while the wail of women and of orphans is in their ears? It were to convert their pious purpose into mortal sin, and to derogate from the high fame they have so well won. Yes, fight but valiantly, and perhaps, before the very sun that is now slowly rising shall sink in the sea, you will see it shining on the ranks of Shrewsbury and Chester. When did the Welshman wait to hear the clangor of their trumpets or the rustling of their silken banners? Fight bravely—fight freely but a while. Our castle is strong—our munition ample—your hearts are good—your arms are powerful. God is nigh to us, and our friends are not far distant. Fight, then, in the name of all that is good and holy—fight for yourselves, for your wives, for your children, and for your property; and oh! fight for an orphan maiden, who hath no other defenders but what a sense of her sorrows, and the remembrance of her father, may raise up among you!"

Such speeches as these made a powerful impression on the men to whom they were addressed, already hardened, by habits and sentiments, against a sense of danger. The chivalrous Normans swore, on the cross of their swords, they would die to a man ere they would surrender their posts; the blunter Anglo-Saxons cried, "Shame on him who would render up such a lamb as Eveline to a Welsh wolf, while he could make her a bulwark with his body!" Even the cold Flemings caught a spark of the enthusiasm with which the others were animated, and muttered to each other praises of the young lady's beauty, and short but honest resolves to do the best they might in her defense.

Rose Flammock, who accompanied her lady with one or two attendants upon her circuit around the castle, seemed to have relapsed into her natural character of a shy and timid girl, out of the excited state into which she had been brought by the suspicions which in the evening before had attached to her father's character. She tripped closely but respectfully after Eveline, and listened to what she said from time to time, with the awe and admiration of a child listening to its tutor, while only her moistened eye expressed how far she felt or comprehended the extent of the danger, or the force of the exhortations. There was, however, a moment when the youthful maiden's eye became more bright, her step more confident, her looks more elevated. This was when they approached the spot where her father, having discharged the duties of commander of the garrison, was now exercising those of engineer, and displaying great skill, as well as wonderful personal strength, in directing and assisting the establishment of a large mangonel (a military engine used for casting stones) upon a station commanding an exposed postern-gate, which led from the western side of the castle down to the plain; and where a severe assault was naturally to be expected. The greater part of his armor lay beside him, but covered with his cassock to screen it from the morning dew; while in his leathern doublet, with arms bare to the shoulder, and a huge sledge-hammer in his hand, he set an example to the mechanics who worked under his direction.

In slow and solid natures there is usually a touch of shamefacedness, and a sensitiveness to the breach of petty observances. Wilkin Flammock had been unmoved even to insensibility at the imputation of treason so lately cast upon him; but he colored high, and was confused, while, hastily throwing on his cassock, he endeavored to conceal the dis-

habille in which he had been surprised by the Lady Eveline. Not so his daughter. Proud of her father's zeal, her eye gleamed from him to her mistress with a look of triumph, which seemed to say, "And this faithful follower is he who was suspected of treachery!"

Eveline's own bosom made her the same reproach; and, anxious to atone for her momentary doubt of his fidelity, she offered for his acceptance a ring of value, "In small amends," she said, "of a momentary misconstruction."

"It needs not, lady," said Flammock, with his usual bluntness, "unless I have the freedom to bestow the gaud on Rose; for I think she was grieved enough at that which moved me little—as why should it?"

"Dispose of it as thou wilt," said Eveline, "the stone it bears is as true as thine own faith."

Here Eveline paused, and looking on the broad expanded plain which extended between the site of the castle and the river, observed how silent and still the morning was rising over what had so lately been a scene of such extensive slaughter.

"It will not be so long," answered Flammock: "we shall have noise enough, and that nearer to our ears than yesterday."

"Which way lie the enemy?" said Eveline; "methinks I can spy neither tents or pavilions."

"They use none, lady," answered Wilkin Flammock. "Heaven has denied them the grace and knowledge to weave linen enough for such a purpose. Yonder they lie on both sides of the river, covered with naught but their white mantles. Would one think that a host of thieves and cut-throats could look so like the finest object in nature—a well-spread bleaching-field? Hark—hark! the wasps are beginning to buzz; they will soon be plying their stings."

In fact, there was heard among the Welsh army a low and indistinct murmur, like that of

> Bees alarm'd, and mustering in their hives.

Terrified at the hollow menacing sound, which grew louder every moment, Rose, who had all the irritability of a sensitive temperament, clung to her father's arm, saying, in a terrified whisper, "It is like the sound of the sea the night before the great inundation."

"And it betokens too rough weather for women to be abroad in," said Flammock. "Go to your chamber, Lady

Eveline, if it be your will; and go you too, Roschen. God bless you both, ye do but keep us idle here."

And, indeed, conscious that she had done all that was incumbent upon her, and fearful lest the chill which she felt creeping over her own heart should infect others, Eveline took her vassal's advice, and withdrew slowly to her own apartment, often casting back her eye to the place where the Welsh, now drawn out and under arms, were advancing their ridgy battalions, like the waves of an approaching tide.

The Prince of Powys had, with considerable military skill, adopted a plan of attack suitable to the fiery genius of his followers, and calculated to alarm on every point the feeble garrison.

The three sides of the castle which were defended by the river were watched each by a numerous body of the British, with instructions to confine themselves to the discharge of arrows, unless they should observe that some favorable opportunity of close attack should occur. But far the greater part of Gwenwyn's forces, consisting of three columns of great strength, advanced along the plain on the western side of the castle, and menaced, with a desperate assault, the walls, which, in that direction, were deprived of the defense of the river. The first of these formidable bodies consisted entirely of archers, who dispersed themselves in front of the beleaguered place, and took advantage of every bush and rising ground which could afford them shelter; and then began to bend their bows and shower their arrows on the battlements and loopholes, suffering, however, a great deal more damage than they were able to inflict, as the garrison returned their shot in comparative safety, and with more secure and deliberate aim.* Under cover, however, of their discharge of arrows, two very strong bodies of Welsh attempted to carry the outer defenses of the castle by storm. They had axes to destroy the palisades, then called barriers; fagots to fill up the external ditches; torches to set fire to aught combustible which they might find; and, above all, ladders to scale the walls.

These detachments rushed with incredible fury towards the point of attack, despite a most obstinate defense, and the great loss which they sustained by missiles of every kind, and continued the assault for nearly an hour, supplied by reinforcements which more than recruited their diminished numbers. When they were at last compelled to retreat, they seemed to

* See Welsh Bowman. Note 7.

adopt a new and yet more harassing species of attack. A large body assaulted one exposed point of the fortress with such fury as to draw thither as many of the beseiged as could possibly be spared from other defended posts, and when there appeared a point less strongly manned than was adequate to defence, that, in its turn, was furiously assailed by a separate body of the enemy.

Thus the defenders of the Garde Doloureuse resembled the embarrassed traveler engaged in repelling a swarm of hornets, which, while he brushes them from one part, fix in swarms upon another, and drive him to despair by their numbers and the boldness and multiplicity of their attacks. The postern being, of course, a principal point of attack, Father Aldrovand, whose anxiety would not permit him to be absent from the walls, and who, indeed, where decency would permit, took an occasional share in the active defense of the place, hasted thither, as the point chiefly in danger.

Here he found the Fleming, like a second Ajax, grim with dust and blood, working with his own hands the great engine which he had lately helped to erect, and at the same time giving heedful eye to all the exigencies around.

"How thinkest thou of this day's work?" said the monk in a whisper.

"What skills it talking of it, father?" replied Flammock; "thou art no soldier, and I have no time for words."

"Nay, take thy breath," said the monk, tucking up the sleeves of his frock; "I will try to help thee the whilst, although, Our Lady pity me, I know nothing of these strange devices, not even the names. But our rule commands us to labor; there can be no harm, therefore, in turning this winch, or in placing this steel-headed piece of wood opposite to the cord (suiting his action to his words), nor see I aught uncanonical in adjusting the lever thus, or in touching the spring."

The large bolt whizzed through the air as he spoke, and was so successfully aimed, that it struck down a Welsh chief of eminence, to whom Gwenwyn himself was in the act of giving some important charge.

"Well driven, trebuchet—well flown, quarrel!" cried the monk, unable to contain his delight, and giving, in his triumph, the true technical names to the engine and the javelin which it discharged.

"And well aimed, monk," added Wilkin Flammock: "I think thou knowest more than is in thy breviary."

"Care not thou for that," said the father; "and now

that thou seest I can work an engine, and that the Welsh knaves seem something low in stomach, what think'st thou of our estate ?"

"Well enough, for a bad one, if we may hope for speedy succor ; but men's bodies are of flesh, not of iron, and we may be at last wearied out by numbers. Only one soldier to four yards of wall is a fearful odds ; and the villains are aware of it, and keep us to sharp work."

The renewal of the assault here broke off their conversation, nor did the active enemy permit them to enjoy much repose until sunset ; for, alarming them with repeated menaces of attack upon different points, besides making two or three formidable and furious assaults, they left them scarce time to breathe, or to take a moment's refreshment. Yet the Welsh paid a severe price for their temerity ; for while nothing could exceed the bravery with which their men repeatedly advanced to the attack, those which were made latest in the day had less of animated desperation than their first onset ; and it is probable that the sense of having sustained great loss, and apprehension of its effects on the spirits of his people, made nightfall, and the interruption of the contest, as acceptable to Gwenwyn as to the exhausted garrison of the Garde Doloureuse.

But in the camp or leaguer of the Welsh there was glee and triumph, for the loss of the past day was forgotten in recollection of the signal victory which had preceded this siege ; and the dispirited garrison could hear from their walls the laugh and the song, the sound of harping and gaiety, which triumphed by anticipation over their surrender.

The sun was for some time sunk, the twilight deepened, and night closed with a blue and cloudless sky, in which the thousand spangles that deck the firmament received double brilliancy from some slight touch of frost, although the paler planet, their mistress, was but in her first quarter. The necessities of the garrison were considerably aggravated by that of keeping a very strong and watchful guard, ill according with the weakness of their numbers, at a time which appeared favorable to any sudden nocturnal alarm ; and, so urgent was this duty, that those who had been more slightly wounded on the preceding day were obliged to take their share in it, notwithstanding their hurts. The monk and Fleming, who now perfectly understood each other, went in company around the walls at midnight, exhorting the warders to be watchful, and examining with their own eyes the state of the fortress. It was in the course of these

rounds, and as they were ascending an elevated platform by a range of narrow and uneven steps, something galling to the monk's tread, that they perceived on the summit to which they were ascending, instead of the black corslet of the Flemish sentinel who had been placed there, two white forms, the appearance of which struck Wilkin Flammock with more dismay than he had shown during any of the doubtful events of the preceding day's fight.

"Father," he said, "betake yourself to your tools; *es spuckt*—there are hobgoblins here!"

The good father had not learned, as a priest, to defy the spiritual host, whom, as a soldier, he had dreaded more than any mortal enemy; but he began to recite, with chattering teeth, the exorcism of the church, "*Conjouro vos omnes, spiritus maligni, magni atque parvi,*" when he was interrupted by the voice of Eveline, who called out, "Is it you, Father Aldrovand?"

Much lightened at heart by finding they had no ghost to deal with, Wilkin Flammock and the priest advanced hastily to the platform, where they found the lady with her faithful Rose, the former with a half pike in her hand, like a sentinel on duty.

"How is this, daughter?" said the monk—"how came you here, and thus armed? And where is the sentinel—the lazy Flemish hound that should have kept the post?"

"May he not be a lazy hound, yet not a Flemish one, father?" said Rose, who was ever awakened by anything which seemed a reflection upon her country; "methinks I have heard of such curs of English breed."

"Go to, Rose, you are too malapert for a young maiden," said her father. "Once more, where is Peterkin Vorst, who should have kept this post?"

"Let him not be blamed for my fault," said Eveline, pointing to a place where the Flemish sentinel lay in the shade of the battlement fast asleep. "He was overcome with toil, had fought hard through the day, and when I saw him asleep as I came hither, like a wandering spirit that cannot take slumber or repose, I would not disturb the rest which I envied. As he had fought for me, I might, I thought, watch an hour for him; so I took his weapon with the purpose of remaining here till some one should come to relieve him."

"I will relieve the schelm, with a vengeance!" said Wilkin Glammock, and saluted the slumbering and prostrate warder with two kicks which made his corslet clatter. The man started to his feet in no small alarm, which he would

have communicated to the next sentinels and to the whole garrison, by crying out that the Welsh were upon the walls, had not the monk covered his broad mouth with his hand just as the roar was issuing forth. "Peace, and get thee down to the under bailey," said he; "thou deservest death, by all the policies of war; but, look ye, varlet, and see who has saved your worthless neck, by watching while you were dreaming of swine's flesh and beer-pots."

The Fleming, although as yet but half awake, was sufficiently conscious of his situation to sneak off without reply, after two or three awkward congees, as well to Eveline as to those by whom his repose had been so unceremoniously interrupted.

"He deserves to be tied neck and heel, the houndsfoot," said Wilkin. "But what would you have, lady?" My countrymen cannot live without rest or sleep." So saying, he gave a yawn so wide as if he had proposed to swallow one of the turrets at an angle of the platform on which he stood, as if it had only garnished a Christmas pasty.

"True, good Wilkin," said Eveline; "and do you therefore take some rest, and trust to my watchfulness, at least till the guards are relieved. I cannot sleep if I would, and I would not if I could."

"Thanks, lady," said Flammock; "and in truth, as this is a centrical place, and the rounds must pass in an hour at farthest, I will e'en close my eyes for such a space, for the lids feel as heavy as flood-gates."

"O, father—father!" exclaimed Rose, alive to her sire's unceremonious neglect of decorum, "think where you are, and in whose presence!"

"Ay—ay, good Flammock," said the monk, "remember the presence of a noble Norman maiden is no place for folding of cloaks and donning of nightcaps."

"Let him alone, father," said Eveline, who in another moment might have smiled at the readiness with which Wilkin Flammock folded himself in his huge cloak, extended his substantial form on the stone bench, and gave the most decided tokens of profound repose, long ere the monk had done speaking. "Forms and fashions of respect," she continued, "are for times of ease and nicety; when in danger, the soldier's bedchamber is wherever he can find leisure for an hour's sleep; his eating-hall, wherever he can obtain food. Sit thou down by Rose and me, good father, and tell us of some holy lesson, which may pass away these hours of weariness and calamity."

The father obeyed; but, however willing to afford consolation, his ingenuity and theological skill suggested nothing better than a recitation of the penitentiary psalms, in which task he continued until fatigue became too powerful for him also, when he committed the same breach of decorum for which he had upbraided Wilkin Flammock, and fell fast asleep in the midst of his devotions.

CHAPTER IX

"O night of woe," she said and wept,
"O night foreboding sorrow!
O night of woe," she said and wept,
"But more I dread the morrow!"

SIR GILBERT ELLIOT.

THE fatigue which had exhausted Flammock and the monk was unfelt by the two anxious maidens, who remained with their eyes bent, now upon the dim landscape, now on the stars by which it was lighted, as if they could have read there the events which the morrow was to bring forth. It was a placid and melancholy scene. Tree and field, and hill and plain, lay before them in doubtful light, while, at greater distance, their eye could with difficulty trace one or two places where the river, hidden in general by banks and trees, spread its more expanded bosom to the stars and the pale crescent. All was still, excepting the solemn rush of the waters, and now and then the shrill tinkle of a harp, which, heard from more than a mile's distance through the midnight silence, announced that some of the Welshmen still protracted their most beloved amusement. The wild notes, partially heard, seemed like the voice of some passing spirit; and, connected as they were with ideas of fierce and unrelenting hostility, thrilled on Eveline's ear, as if prophetic of war and woe, captivity and death. The only other sounds which disturbed the extreme stillness of the night were the occasional step of a sentinel upon his post, or the hooting of the owls, which seemed to wail the approaching downfall of the moonlight turrets in which they had established their ancient habitations.

The calmness of all around seemed to press like a weight on the bosom of the unhappy Eveline, and brought to her mind a deeper sense of present grief, and keener apprehension of future horrors, than had reigned there during the bustle, blood, and confusion of the preceding day. She rose up, she sat down, she moved to and fro on the platform, she remained fixed like a statue to a single spot, as if she were trying by variety of posture to divert her internal sense of fear and sorrow.

At length, looking at the monk and the Fleming as they

slept soundly under the shade of the battlement, she could no longer forbear breaking silence. "Men are happy," she said, "my Beloved Rose: their anxious thoughts are either diverted by toilsome exertion or drowned in the insensibility which follows it. They may encounter wounds and death, but it is we who feel in the spirit a more keen anguish than the body knows, and in the gnawing sense of present ill and fear of future misery suffer a living death, more cruel than that which ends our woes at once."

"Do not be thus downcast, my noble lady," said Rose; "be rather what you were yesterday, caring for the wounded, for the aged, for every one but yourself, exposing even your dear life among the showers of the Welsh arrows, when doing so could give courage to others; while I—shame on me!—could but tremble, sob, and weep, and needed all the little wit I have to prevent my shouting with the wild cries of the Welsh, or screaming and groaning with those of our friends who fell around me."

"Alas! Rose," answered her mistress, "you may at pleasure indulge your fears to the verge of distraction itself; you have a father to fight and watch for you. Mine—my kind, noble, and honored parent—lies dead on yonder field, and all which remains for me is to act as may best become his memory. But this moment is at least mine, to think upon and to mourn for him."

So saying, and overpowered by the long-repressed burst of filial sorrow, she sunk down on the banquette which ran along the inside of the embattled parapet of the platform, and murmuring to herself, "He is gone forever!" abandoned herself to the extremity of grief. One hand grasped unconsciously the weapon which she held, and served, at the same time, to prop her forehead, while the tears, by which she was now for the first time relieved, flowed in torrents from her eyes, and her sobs seemed so convulsive, that Rose almost feared her heart was bursting. Her affection and sympathy dictated at once the kindest course which Eveline's condition permitted. Without attempting to control the torrent of grief in its full current, she gently sat her down beside the mourner, and possessing herself of the hand which had sunk motionless by her side, she alternately pressed it to her lips, her bosom, and her brow, now covered it with kisses, now bedewed it with tears, and, amid these tokens of the most devoted and humble sympathy, waited a more composed moment to offer her little stock of consolation in such deep silence and stillness, that, as the

pale light fell upon the two beautiful young women, it seemed rather to show a group of statuary, the work of some eminent sculptor, than beings whose eyes still wept and whose hearts still throbbed. At a little distance, the gleaming corslet of the Fleming, and the dark garments of Father Aldrovand, as they lay prostrate on the stone steps, might represent the bodies of those for whom the principal figures were mourning.

After a deep agony of many minutes, it seemed that the sorrows of Eveline were assuming a more composed character: her convulsive sobs were changed for long, low, profound sighs, and the course of her tears, though they still flowed, was milder and less violent. Her kind attendant, availing herself of these gentler symptoms, tried softly to win the spear from her lady's grasp. "Let me be sentinel for a while," she said, "my sweet lady; I will at least scream louder than you if any danger should approach." She ventured to kiss her cheek and throw her arms around Eveline's neck while she spoke; but a mute caress, which expressed her sense of the faithful girl's kind intentions to minister if possible to her repose, was the only answer returned. They remained for many minutes silent and in the same posture—Eveline like an upright and slender poplar, Rose, who encircled her lady in her arms, like the woodbine which twines around it.

At length Rose suddenly felt her young mistress shiver in her embrace, and that Eveline's hand grasped her arm rigidly as she whispered, "Do you hear nothing?"

"No, nothing but the hooting of the owl," answered Rose, timorously.

"I heard a distant sound," said Eveline—"I thought I heard it. Hark, it comes again! Look from the battlements, Rose, while I awaken the priest and thy father."

"Dearest lady," said Rose, "I dare not. What can this sound be that is heard by one only? You are deceived by the rush of the river."

"I would not alarm the castle unnecessarily," said Eveline, pausing, "or even break your father's needful slumbers, by a fancy of mine—— But hark—hark! I hear it again—distinct amidst the intermitting sound of the rushing water—a low, tremulous sound, mingled with a tinkling like smiths or armorers at work upon their anvils."

Rose had by this time sprung up on the banquette, and flinging back her rich tresses of fair hair, had applied her hand behind her ear to collect the distant sound. "I hear

it," she cried, "and it increases. Awake them, for Heaven's sake, and without a moment's delay!"

Eveline accordingly stirred the sleepers with the reversed end of the lance, and as they started to their feet in haste, she whispered, in a hasty but cautious voice, "To arms—the Welsh are upon us!"

"What—where?" said Wilkin Flammock—"where be they?"

"Listen, and you will hear them arming," she replied.

"The noise is but in thine own fancy, lady," said the Fleming, whose organs were of the same heavy character with his form and his disposition. "I would I had not gone to sleep at all, since I was to be awakened so soon."

"Nay, but listen, good Flammock; the sound of armor comes from the northeast."

"The Welsh lie not in that quarter, lady," said Wilkin, "and, besides, they wear no armor."

"I hear it—I hear it!" said Father Aldrovand, who had been listening for some time. "All praise to St. Benedict! Our Lady of the Garde Doloureuse has been gracious to her servants as ever! It is the tramp of horse—it is the clash of armor; the chivalry of the Marches are coming to our relief. *Kyrie eleison!*"

"I hear something too," said Flammock—"something like the hollow sound of the great sea, when it burst into my neighbor Klinkerman's warehouse, and rolled his pots and pans against each other. But it were an evil mistake, father, to take foes for friends: we were best rouse the people."

"Tush!" said the priest, "talk to me of pots and kettles? Was I squire of the body to Count Stephen Mauleverer for twenty years, and do I not know the tramp of a war-horse or the clash of a mail-coat? But call the men to the walls at any rate, and have me the best drawn up in the base-court; we may help them by a sally."

"That will not be rashly undertaken with my consent," murmured the Fleming; "but to the wall if you will, and in good time. But keep your Normans and English silent, sir priest, else their unruly and noisy joy will awaken the Welsh camp, and prepare them for their unwelcome visitors."

The monk laid his finger on his lip in sign of intelligence, and they parted in opposite directions, each to rouse the defenders of the castle, who were soon heard drawing from all quarters to their posts upon the walls, with hearts in a very different mood from that in which they had descended from them. The utmost caution being used to prevent noise, the

manning of the walls was accomplished in silence, and the garrison awaited in breathless expectation the success of the forces who were rapidly advancing to their relief.

The character of the sounds, which now loudly awakened the silence of this eventful night, could no longer be mistaken. They were distinguishable from the rushing of a mighty river, or from the muttering sound of distant thunder, by the sharp and angry notes which the clashing of the rider's arms mingled with the deep bass of the horses' rapid tread.* From the long continuance of the sounds, their loudness, and the extent of horizon from which they seemed to come, all in the castle were satisfied that the approaching relief consisted of several very strong bodies of horse. At once this mighty sound ceased, as if the earth on which they trode had either devoured the armed squadrons or had become incapable of resounding to their tramp. The defenders of the Garde Doloureuse concluded that their friends had made a sudden halt, to give their horses breath, examine the leaguer of the enemy, and settle the order of the attack upon them. The pause, however, was but momentary.

The British, so alert at surprising their enemies, were themselves, on many occasions, liable to surprise. Their men were undisciplined, and sometimes negligent of the patient duties of the sentinel; and, besides, their foragers and flying parties, who scoured the country during the preceding day, had brought back tidings which had lulled them into fatal security. Their camp had been therefore carelessly guarded, and, confident in the smallness of the garrison, they had altogether neglected the important military duty of establishing patrols and outposts at a proper distance from their main body. Thus, the cavalry of the Lords Marchers, notwithstanding the noise which accompanied their advance, had approached very near the British camp without exciting the least alarm. But while they were arranging their forces into separate columns, in order to commence the assault, a loud and increasing clamor among the Welsh announced that they were at length aware of their danger. The shrill and discordant cries by which they endeavored to assemble their men, each under the banner of his chief, resounded from their leaguer. But these rallying shouts were soon converted into screams, and clamors of horror and dismay, when the thundering charge of the barbed horses and heavily-armed cavalry of the Anglo-Normans surprised their undefended camp.

* See Rattle of Armor. Note 8.

Yet not even under circumstances so adverse did the descendants of the ancient Britons renounce their defense, or forfeit their old hereditary privilege to be called the bravest of mankind. Their cries of defiance and resistance were heard resounding above the groans of the wounded, the shouts of the triumphant assailants, and the universal tumult of the night-battle. It was not until the morning light began to peep forth that the slaughter or dispersion of Gwenwyn's forces was complete, and that the "earthquake voice of victory" arose in uncontrolled and unmingled energy of exultation.

Then the besieged, if they could be still so termed, looking from their towers over the expanded country beneath, witnessed nothing but one widespread scene of desultory flight and unrelaxed pursuit. That the Welsh had been permitted to encamp in fancied security upon the hither side of the river now rendered their discomfiture more dreadfully fatal. The single pass by which they could cross to the other side was soon completely choked by fugitives, on whose rear raged the swords of the victorious Normans. Many threw themselves into the river, upon the precarious chance of gaining the farther side, and, except a few who were uncommonly strong, skilful, and active, perished among the rocks and in the currents; others, more fortunate, escaped by fords, with which they had accidentally been made acquainted; many dispersed, or, in small bands, fled in reckless despair towards the castle, as if the fortress, which had beat them off when victorious, could be a place of refuge to them in their present forlorn condition; while others roamed wildly over the plain, seeking only escape from immediate and instant danger, without knowing whither they ran.

The Normans, meanwhile, divided into small parties followed and slaughtered them at pleasure; while, as a rallying point for the victors, the banner of Hugo de Lacy streamed from a small mount, on which Gwenwyn had lately pitched his own, and surrounded by a competent force, both of infantry and horsemen, which the experienced baron permitted on no account to wander far from it.

The rest, as we have already said, followed the chase with shouts of exultation and of vengeance, ringing around the battlements, which resounded with the cries, "Ha, St. Edward! Ha, St. Denis! Strike—slay—no quarter to the Welsh wolves—think on Raymond Berenger!"

The soldiers on the walls joined in these vengeful and

victorious clamors, and discharged several sheaves of arrows upon such fugitives as, in their extremity, approached too near the castle. They would fain have sallied to give more active assistance in the work of destruction; but the communication being now open with the Constable of Chester's forces, Wilkin Flammock considered himself and the garrison to be under the orders of that renowned chief, and refused to listen to the eager admonitions of Father Aldrovand, who would, notwithstanding his sacerdotal character, have willingly himself taken charge of the sally which he proposed.

At length, the scene of slaughter seemed at an end. The retreat was blown on many a bugle, and knights halted on the plain to collect their personal followers, muster them under their proper pennon, and then march them slowly back to the great standard of their leader, around which the main body were again to be assembled, like the clouds which gather around the evening sun—a fanciful simile, which might yet be drawn farther, in respect of the level rays of strong lurid light which shot from those dark battalions, as the beams were flung back from their polished armor.

The plain was in this manner soon cleared of the horsemen, and remained occupied only by the dead bodies of the slaughtered Welshmen. The bands who had followed the pursuit to a greater distance were also now seen returning, driving before them, or dragging after them, dejected and unhappy captives, to whom they had given quarter when their thirst of blood was satiated.

It was then that, desirous to attract the attention of his liberators, Wilkin Flammock commanded all the banners of the castle to be displayed, under a general shout of acclamation from those who had fought under them. It was answered by a universal cry of joy from De Lacy's army, which rung so wide as might even yet have startled such of the Welsh fugitives as, far distant from this disastrous field of flight, might have ventured to halt for a moment's repose.

Presently after this greeting had been exchanged a single rider advanced from the Constable's army towards the castle, showing, even at a distance, an unusual dexterity of horsemanship and grace of deportment. He arrived at the drawbridge, which was instantly lowered to admit him, whilst Flammock and the monk, for the latter, as far as he could, associated himself with the former in all acts of authority, hastened to receive the envoy of their liberator. They found him just alighted from the raven-colored horse, which

was slightly flecked with blood as well as foam, and still panted with the exertions of the evening [morning]; though, answering to the caressing hand of his youthful rider, he arched his neck, shook his steel caparison, and snorted, to announce his unabated mettle and unwearied love of combat. The young man's eagle look bore the same token of unabated vigor, mingled with the signs of recent exertion. His helmet hanging at his saddle-bow showed a gallant countenance, colored highly, but not inflamed, which looked out from a rich profusion of short chestnut curls; and although his armor was of a massive and simple form, he moved under it with such elasticity and ease, that it seemed a graceful attire, not a burden or incumbrance. A furred mantle had not sat on him with more easy grace than the heavy hauberk, which complied with every gesture of his noble form. Yet his countenance was so juvenile that only the down on the upper lip announced decisively the approach to manhood. The females, who thronged into the court to see the first envoy of their deliverers, could not forbear mixing praises of his beauty with blessings on his valor; and one comely middle-aged dame, in particular, distinguished by the tightness with which her scarlet hose sat on a well-shaped leg and ankle, and by the cleanness of her coif, pressed close up to the young squire, and, more forward than the rest, doubled the crimson hue of his cheek by crying aloud that Our Lady of the Garde Doloureuse had sent them news of their redemption by an angel from the sanctuary—a speech which, although Father Aldrovand shook his head, was received by her companions with such general acclamation as greatly embarrassed the young man's modesty.

"Peace, all of ye!" said Wilkin Flammock. "Know you no respect, you women, or have you never seen a young gentleman before, that you hang on him like flies on a honeycomb? Stand back, I say, and let us hear in peace what are the commands of the noble Lord of Lacy."

"These," said the young man, "I can only deliver in the presence of the right noble demoiselle, Eveline Berenger, if I may be thought worthy of such honor."

"That thou art, noble sir," said the same forward dame, who had before expressed her admiration so energetically; "I will uphold thee worthy of her presence, and whatever other grace a lady can do thee."

"Now hold thy tongue, with a wanion!" said the monk; while in the same breath the Fleming exclaimed, "Beware

the cucking-stool, Dame Scant-o'-Grace!" while he conducted the noble youth across the court.

"Let my good horse be cared for," said the cavalier, as he put the bridle into the hand of a menial; and in doing so got rid of some part of his female retinue, who began to pat and praise the steed as much as they had done the rider; and some, in the enthusiasm of their joy, hardly abstained from kissing the stirrups and horse-furniture.

But Dame Gillian was not so easily diverted from her own point as were some of her companions. She continued to repeat the word "cucking-stool" till the Fleming was out of hearing, and then became more specific in her objurgation. "And why cucking-stool, I pray, Sir Wilkin Butterfirkin? You are the man would stop an English mouth with a Flemish damask napkin, I trow! Marry guep, my cousin the weaver! And why the cucking-stool, I pray? because my young lady is comely, and the young squire is a man of mettle, reverence to his beard that is to come yet! Have we not eyes to see, and have we not a mouth and a tongue?"

"In troth, Dame Gillian, they do you wrong who doubt it," said Eveline's nurse, who stood by; "but, I prithee, keep it shut now, were it but for womanhood."

"How now, mannerly Mrs. Margery?" replied the incorrigible Gillian; "is your heart so high, because you dandled our young lady on your knee fifteen years since? Let me tell you, the cat will find its way to the cream, though it was brought up on an abbess's lap."

"Home, housewife—home!" exclaimed her husband, the old huntsman, who was weary of this public exhibition of his domestic termagant—"home, or I will give you a taste of my dog-leash. Here are both the confessor and Wilkin Flammock wondering at your impudence."

"Indeed!" replied Gillian; "and are not two fools enough for wonderment, that you must come with your grave pate to make up the number three?"

There was a general laugh at the huntsman's expense, under cover of which he prudently withdrew his spouse, without attempting to continue the war of tongue, in which she had shown such a decided superiority.

This controversy, so light is the change in human spirits, especially among the lower class, awakened bursts of idle mirth among beings who had so lately been in the jaws of danger, if not of absolute despair.

CHAPTER X

They bore him barefaced on his bier,
Six proper youths and tall,
And many a tear bedew'd his grave
Within yon kirkyard wall.
The Friar of Orders Gray.

WHILE these matters took place in the castle-yard, the young squire, Damian Lacy, obtained the audience which he had requested of Eveline Berenger, who received him in the great hall of the castle, seated beneath the dais, or canopy, and waited upon by Rose and other female attendants, of whom the first alone was permitted to use a tabouret or small stool in her presence, so strict were the Norman maidens of quality in maintaining their claims to high rank and observance.

The youth was introduced by the confessor and Flammock, as the spiritual character of the one, and the trust reposed by her late father in the other, authorized them to be present upon the occasion. Eveline naturally blushed as she advanced two steps to receive the handsome youthful envoy; and her bashfulness seemed infectious, for it was with some confusion that Damian went through the ceremony of saluting the hand which she extended towards him in token of welcome. Eveline was under the necessity of speaking first.

"We advance as far as our limits will permit us," she said, "to greet with our thanks the messenger who brings us tidings of safety. We speak—unless we err—to the noble Damian of Lacy?"

"To the humblest of your servants," answered Damian, falling with some difficulty into the tone of courtesy which his errand and character required, "who approaches you on behalf of his noble uncle, Hugo de Lacy, Constable of Chester."

"Will not our noble deliverer in person honor with his presence the poor dwelling which he has saved?"

"My noble kinsman," answered Damian, "is now God's soldier, and bound by a vow not to come beneath a roof until he embark for the Holy Land. But by my voice he congratulates you on the defeat of your savage enemies, and

sends you these tokens that the comrade and friend of your noble father hath not left his lamentable death many hours unavenged." So saying, he drew forth and laid before Eveline the gold bracelets, the coronet, and the eudorchawg, or chain of linked gold, which had distinguished the rank of the Welsh prince.

"Gwenwyn hath then fallen?" said Eveline, a natural shudder combating with the feelings of gratified vengeance, as she beheld that the trophies were specked with blood—"the slayer of my father is no more!"

"My kinsman's lance transfixed the Briton as he endeavored to rally his flying people; he died grimly on the weapon which had passed more than a fathom through his body, and exerted his last strength in a furious but ineffectual blow with his mace."

"Heaven is just," said Eveline; "may his sins be forgiven to the man of blood, since he hath fallen by a death so bloody! One question I would ask you, noble sir. My father's remains——" she paused, unable to proceed.

"An hour will place them at your disposal, most honored lady," replied the squire, in the tone of sympathy which the sorrows of so young and so fair an orphan called irresistibly forth. "Such preparations as time admitted were making, even when I left the host, to transport what was mortal of the noble Berenger from the field on which we found him, amid a monument of slain which his own sword had raised. My kinsman's vow will not allow him to pass your portcullis; but, with your permission, I will represent him, if such be your pleasure, at these honored obsequies, having charge to that effect."

"My brave and noble father," said Eveline, making an effort to restrain her tears, "will be best mourned by the noble and the brave." She would have continued, but her voice failed her, and she was obliged to withdraw abruptly, in order to give vent to her sorrow, and prepare for the funeral rites with such ceremony as circumstances should permit. Damian bowed to the departing mourner as reverently as he would have done to a divinity, and, taking his horse, returned to his uncle's host, which had encamped hastily on the recent field of battle.

The sun was now high, and the whole plain presented the appearance of a bustle equally different from the solitude of the early morning and from the roar and fury of the subsequent engagement. The news of Hugo de Lacy's victory everywhere spread abroad with all the alacrity of triumph,

and had induced many of the inhabitants of the country, who had fled before the fury of the Wolf of Plinlimmon, to return to their desolate habitations. Numbers also of the loose and profligate characters which abound in a country subject to the frequent changes of war, had flocked thither in quest of spoil, or to gratify a spirit of restless curiosity. The Jew and the Lombard, despising danger where there was a chance of gain, might be already seen bartering liquors and wares with the victorious men-at-arms, for the blood-stained ornaments of gold lately worn by the defeated British. Others acted as brokers betwixt the Welsh captives and their captors ; and where they could trust the means and good faith of the former, sometimes became bound for, or even advanced in ready money, the sums necessary for their ransom ; whilst a more numerous class became themselves the purchasers of those prisoners who had no immediate means of settling with their conquerors.

That the spoil thus acquired might not long encumber the soldier, or blunt his ardor for farther enterprise, the usual means of dissipating military spoils were already at hand. Courtesans, mimes, jugglers, minstrels, and tale-tellers of every description had accompanied the night-march ; and, secure in the military reputation of the celebrated De Lacy, had rested fearlessly at some little distance until the battle was fought and won. These now approached, in many a joyous group, to congratulate the victors. Close to the parties which they formed for the dance, the song, or the tale, upon the yet bloody field, the countrymen, summoned in for the purpose, were opening large trenches for depositing the dead, leeches were seen tending the wounded, priests and monks confessing those in extremity, soldiers transporting from the fields the bodies of the more honored among the slain, peasants mourning over their trampled crops and plundered habitations, and widows and orphans searching for the bodies of husbands and parents amidst the promiscuous carnage of two combats. Thus woe mingled her wildest notes with those of jubilee and bacchanal triumph, and the plain of the Garde Douloureuse formed a singular parallel to the varied maze of human life, where joy and grief are so strangely mixed, and where the confines of mirth and pleasure often border on those of sorrow and of death.

About noon these various noises were at once silenced, and the attention alike of those who rejoiced or who grieved was arrested by the loud and mournful sounds of six trumpets, which, uplifting and uniting their thrilling tones in a

wild and melancholy death-note, apprised all that the obsequies of the valiant Raymond Berenger were about to commence. From a tent which had been hastily pitched for the immediate reception of the body, twelve black monks, the inhabitants of a neighboring convent, began to file out in pairs, headed by their abbot, who bore a large cross, and thundered forth the sublime notes of the Catholic *Miserere me, Domine.* Then came a chosen body of men-at-arms, trailing their lances, with their points reversed and pointed to the earth ; and after them the body of the valiant Berenger, wrapped in his own knightly banner, which, regained from the hands of the Welsh, now served its noble owner instead of a funeral pall. The most gallant knights of the Constable's household (for, like other great nobles of that period, he had formed it upon a scale which approached to that of royalty) walked as mourners and supporters of the corpse, which was borne upon lances ; and the Constable of Chester himself, alone and fully armed, excepting the head, followed as chief mourner. A chosen body of squires, men-at-arms, and pages of noble descent brought up the rear of the procession ; while their nakers and trumpets echoed back, from time to time, the melancholy song of the monks, by replying in a note as lugubrious as their own.

The course of pleasure was arrested, and even that of sorrow was for a moment turned from her own griefs, to witness the last honors bestowed on him who had been in life the father and guardian of his people.

The mournful procession traversed slowly the plain which had been within a few hours the scene of such varied events ; and, pausing before the outer gate of the barricades of the castle, invited, by a prolonged and solemn flourish, the fortress to receive the remains of its late gallant defender. The melancholy summons was answered by the warden's horn, the drawbridge sunk, the portcullis rose, and Father Aldrovand appeared in the middle of the gateway, arrayed in his sacerdotal habit, whilst a little space behind him stood the orphaned damsel, in such weeds of mourning as time admitted, supported by her attendant Rose, and followed by the females of the household.

The Constable of Chester paused upon the threshold of the outer gate, and, pointing to the cross signed in white cloth upon his left shoulder, with a lowly reverence resigned to his nephew, Damian, the task of attending the remains of Raymond Berenger to the chapel within the castle. The soldiers of Hugo de Lacy, most of whom were bound by the

same vow with himself, also halted without the castle gate, and remained under arms, while the death-peal of the chapel bell announced from within the progress of the procession.

It winded on through those narrow entrances which were skilfully contrived to interrupt the progress of an enemy, even should he succeed in forcing the outer gate, and arrived at length in the great courtyard, where most of the inhabitants of the fortress, and those who, under recent circumstances, had taken refuge there, were drawn up, in order to look, for the last time, on their departed lord. Among these were mingled a few of the motley crowd from without, whom curiosity, or the expectation of a dole, had brought to the castle gate, and who, by one argument or another, had obtained from the warders permission to enter the interior.

The body was here set down before the door of the chapel, the ancient Gothic front of which formed one side of the courtyard, until certain prayers were recited by the priests, in which the crowd around were supposed to join with becoming reverence.

It was during this interval that a man, whose peaked beard, embroidered girdle, and high-crowned hat of gray felt gave him the air of a Lombard merchant, addressed Margery, the nurse of Eveline, in a whispering tone, and with a foreign accent. "I am a traveling merchant, good sister, and am come hither in quest of gain; can you tell me whether I can have any custom in this castle?"

"You are come at an evil time, sir stranger: you may yourself see that this is a place for mourning, and not for merchandise."

"Yet mourning times have their own commerce," said the stranger, approaching still closer to the side of Margery, and lowering his voice to a tone yet more confidential. "I have sable scarfs of Persian silk; black bugles, in which a princess might mourn for a deceased monarch; cyprus, such as the East hath seldom sent forth; black cloth for mourning hangings—all that may express sorrow and reverence in fashion and attire; and I know how to be grateful to those who help me to custom. Come, bethink you, good dame, such things must be had; I will sell as good ware and as cheap as another; and a kirtle to yourself, or at your pleasure, a purse with five florins, shall be the meed of your kindness."

"I prithee peace, friend," said Margery, "and choose a

better time for vaunting your wares; you neglect both place and season, and if you be farther importunate, I must speak to those who will show you the outward side of the castle gate. I marvel the warders would admit peddlers upon a day such as this: they would drive a gainful bargain by the bedside of their mother, were she dying, I trow." So saying, she turned scornfully from him.

While thus angrily rejected on the one side, the merchant felt his cloak receive an intelligent twitch upon the other, and, looking around upon the signal, he saw a dame, whose black kerchief was affectedly disposed, so as to give an appearance of solemnity to a set of light laughing features, which must have been captivating when young, since they retained so many good points when at least forty years had passed over them. She winked to the merchant, touching at the same time her under lip with her forefinger, to announce the propriety of silence and secrecy; then gliding from the crowd, retreated to a small recess formed by a projecting buttress of the chapel, as if to avoid the pressure likely to take place at the moment when the bier should be lifted. The merchant failed not to follow her example, and was soon by her side, when she did not give him the trouble of opening his affairs, but commenced the conversation herself.

"I have heard what you said to our Dame Margery—Mannerly Margery, as I call her—heard as much, at least, as led me to guess the rest, for I have got an eye in my head, I promise you."

"A pair of them, my pretty dame, and as bright as drops of dew in a May morning."

"Oh, you say so, because I have been weeping," said the scarlet-hosed Gillian, for it was even herself who spoke; "and to be sure, I have good cause, for our lord was always my very good lord, and would sometimes chuck me under the chin, and call me buxom Gillian of Croydon; not that the good gentleman was ever uncivil, for he would thrust a silver twopennies into my hand at the same time. Oh! the friend that I have lost! And I have had anger on this account too: I have seen old Raoul as sour as vinegar, and fit for no place but the kennel for a whole day about it; but, as I said to him, it was not for the like of me to be affronting our master, and a great baron, about a chuck under the chin, or a kiss, or such like."

"No wonder you are so sorry for so kind a master, dame," said the merchant.

"No wonder indeed," replied the dame, with a sigh;

"and then what is to become of us? It is like my young mistress will go to her aunt; or she will marry one of these Lacys that they talk so much of; or, at any rate, she will leave the castle; and it's like old Raoul and I will be turned to grass with the lord's old chargers. The Lord knows, they may as well hang him up with the old hounds, for he is both footless and fangless, and fit for nothing on earth that I know of."

"Your young mistress is that lady in the mourning mantle," said the merchant, "who so nearly sunk down upon the body just now?"

"In good troth is she, sir, and much cause she has to sink down. I am sure she will be to seek for such another father."

"I see you are a most discerning woman, gossip Gillian," answered the merchant; "and yonder youth that supported her is her bridegroom?"

"Much need she has for some one to support her," said Gillian; "and so have I for that matter, for what can poor old rusty Raoul do?"

"But as to your young lady's marriage?" said the merchant.

"No one knows more, than that such a thing was in treaty between our late lord and the great Constable of Chester, that came to-day but just in time to prevent the Welsh from cutting all our throats, and doing the Lord knoweth what mischief besides. But there is a marriage talked of, that is certain; and most folk think it must be for this smooth-cheeked boy, Damian, as they call him; for though the Constable has gotten a beard, which his nephew hath not, it is something too grizzled for a bridegroom's chin. Besides, he goes to the Holy Wars—fittest place for all elderly warriors—I wish he would take Raoul with him. But what is all this to what you were saying about your mourning wares even now? It is a sad truth, that my poor lord is gone. But what then. Well-a-day, you know the good old saw—

> Cloth must we wear,
> Eat beef and drink beer,
> Though the dead go to bier.

And for your merchandising, I am as like to help you with my good word as Mannerly Margery, provided you bid fair for it; since, if the lady loves me not so much, I can turn the steward round my finger."

"Take this in part of our bargain, pretty Mrs. Gillian," said the merchant; "and when my wains come up, I will consider you amply, if I get good sale by your favorable report. But how shall I get into the castle again? for I would wish to consult you, being a sensible woman, before I come in with my luggage."

"Why," answered the complaisant dame, "if our English be on guard, you have only to ask for Gillian, and they will open the wicket to any single man at once—for we English stick all together, were it but to spite the Normans; but if a Norman be on duty, you must ask for old Raoul, and say you come to speak of dogs and hawks for sale, and I warrant you come to speech of me that way. If the sentinel be a Fleming, you have but to say you are a merchant, and he will let you in for the love of trade."

The merchant repeated his thankful acknowledgment, glided from her side, and mixed among the spectators, leaving her to congratulate herself on having gained a brace of florins by the indulgence of her natural talkative humor; for which, on other occasions, she had sometimes dearly paid.

The ceasing of the heavy toll of the castle bell now gave intimation that the noble Raymond Berenger had been laid in the vault with his fathers. That part of the funeral attendants who had come from the host of De Lacy now proceeded to the castle hall, where they partook, but with temperance, of some refreshments, which were offered as a death-meal; and presently after left the castle, headed by young Damian, in the same slow and melancholy form in which they had entered. The monks remained within the castle to sing repeated services for the soul of the deceased, and for those of his faithful men-at-arms who had fallen around him, and who had been so much mangled during, and after, the contest with the Welsh that it was scarce possible to know one individual from another; otherwise the body of Dennis Morolt would have obtained, as his faith well deserved, the honors of a separate funeral.*

* See Cruelties of the Welsh. Note 9.

CHAPTER XI

The funeral baked meats
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage table.
Hamlet.

THE religious rites which followed the funeral of Raymond Berenger endured without interruption for the period of six days, during which alms were distributed to the poor, and relief administered, at the expense of the Lady Eveline, to all those who had suffered by the late inroad. Death-meals, as they were termed, were also spread in honor of the deceased ; but the lady herself, and most of her attendants, observed a stern course of vigil, discipline, and fasts, which appeared to the Normans a more decorous manner of testifying their respect for the dead than the Saxon and Flemish custom of banqueting and drinking inordinately upon such occasions.

Meanwhile, the Constable de Lacy retained a large body of his men encamped under the walls of the Garde Doloureuse, for protection against some new irruption of the Welsh, while with the rest he took advantage of his victory, and struck terror into the British by many well-conducted forays, marked with ravages scarcely less hurtful than their own. Among the enemy, the evils of discord were added to those of defeat and invasion ; for two distant relations of Gwenwyn contended for the throne he had lately occupied, and on this, as on many other occasions, the Britons suffered as much from internal dissension as from the sword of the Normans. A worse politician and a less celebrated soldier than the sagacious and successful De Lacy could not have failed, under such circumstances, to negotiate as he did an advantageous peace, which, while it deprived Powys of a part of its frontier, and the command of some important passes, in which it was the Constable's purpose to build castles, rendered the Garde Doloureuse more secure than formerly from any sudden attack on the part of their fiery and restless neighbors. De Lacy's care also went to re-establishing those settlers who had fled from their possessions, and putting the whole lordship, which now descended upon an un-

protected female, into a state of defense as perfect as its situation on a hostile frontier could possibly permit.

Whilst thus anxiously provident in the affairs of the orphan of the Garde Doloureuse, De Lacy, during the space we have mentioned, sought not to disturb her filial grief by any personal intercourse. His nephew, indeed, was despatched by times every morning to lay before her his uncle's devoirs, in the high-flown language of the day, and acquaint her with the steps which he had taken in her affairs. As a meed due to his relative's high services, Damian was always admitted to see Eveline on such occasions, and returned charged with her grateful thanks, and her implicit acquiescence in whatever the Constable proposed for her consideration.

But when the days of rigid mourning were elapsed, the young De Lacy stated, on the part of his kinsman, that his treaty with the Welsh being concluded, and all things in the district arranged as well as circumstances would permit, the Constable of Chester now proposed to return into his own territory, in order to resume his instant preparations for the Holy Land, which the duty of chastising her enemies had for some days interrupted.

"And will not the noble Constable, before he departs from this place," said Eveline, with a burst of gratitude which the occasion well merited, "receive the personal thanks of her that was ready to perish when he so valiantly came to her aid?"

"It was even on that point that I was commissioned to speak," replied Damian; "but my noble kinsman feels diffident to propose to you that which he most earnestly desires —the privilege of speaking to your own ears certain matters of high import, and with which he judges it fit to entrust no third party."

"Surely," said the maiden, blushing, "there can be naught beyond the bounds of maidenhood in my seeing the noble Constable whenever such is his pleasure."

"But his vow," replied Damian, "binds my kinsman not to come beneath a roof until he sets sail for Palestine; and in order to meet him, you must grace him so far as to visit his pavilion—a condescension which, as a knight and Norman noble, he can scarcely ask of a damsel of high degree."

"And is that all?" said Eveline, who, educated in a remote situation, was a stranger to some of the nice points of etiquette which the damsels of the time observed in keeping their state towards the other sex. "Shall I not," she said, "go to render my thanks to my deliverer, since he cannot

come hither to receive them? Tell the noble Hugo de Lacy that, next to my gratitude to Heaven, it is due to him and to his brave companions in arms. I will come to his tent as to a holy shrine; and, could such homage please him, I would come barefooted, were the roads strewed with flints and with thorns."

"My uncle will be equally honored and delighted with your resolve," said Damian; "but it will be his study to save you all unnecessary trouble, and with that view a pavilion shall be instantly planted before your castle gate, which, if it please you to grace it with your presence, may be the place for the desired interview."

Eveline readily acquiesced in what was proposed, as the expedient agreeable to the Constable and recommended by Damian; but, in the simplicity of her heart, she saw no good reason why, under the guardianship of the latter, she should not instantly, and without farther form, have traversed the little familiar plain on which, when a child, she used to chase butterflies and gather king's-cups, and where of later years she was wont to exercise her palfrey on this well-known plain, being the only space, and that of small extent, which separated her from the camp of the Constable.

The youthful emissary, with whose presence she had now become familiar, retired to acquaint his kinsman and lord with the success of his commission; and Eveline experienced the first sensation of anxiety upon her own account which had agitated her bosom since the defeat and death of Gwenwyn gave her permission to dedicate her thoughts exclusively to grief for the loss which she had sustained in the person of her noble father. But now, when that grief, though not satiated, was blunted by solitary indulgence; now that she was to appear before the person of whose fame she had heard so much, of whose powerful protection she had received such recent proofs, her mind insensibly turned upon the nature and consequences of that important interview. She had seen Hugo de Lacy, indeed, at the great tournament at Chester, where his valor and skill were the theme of every tongue, and she had received the homage which he rendered her beauty when he assigned to her the prize with all the gay flutterings of youthful vanity; but of his person and figure she had no distinct idea, excepting that he was a middle-sized man, dressed in peculiarly rich armor, and that the countenance which looked out from under the shade of his raised visor seemed to her juvenile estimate very nearly as old as that of her father. This per-

son, of whom she had such slight recollection, had been the chosen instrument employed by her tutelar protectress in rescuing her from captivity, and in avenging the loss of a father, and she was bound by her vow to consider him as the arbiter of her fate, if indeed he should deem it worth his while to become so. She wearied her memory with vain efforts to recollect so much of his features as might give her some means of guessing at his disposition, and her judgment toiled in conjecturing what line of conduct he was likely to pursue towards her.

The great baron himself seemed to attach to their meeting a degree of consequence, which was intimated by the formal preparations which he made for it. Eveline had imagined that he might have ridden to the gate of the castle in five minutes, and that, if a pavilion were actually necessary to the decorum of their interview, a tent could have been transferred from his leaguer to the castle gate, and pitched there in ten minutes more. But it was plain that the Constable considered much more form and ceremony as essential to their meeting ; for, in about half an hour after Damian de Lacy had left the castle, not fewer than twenty soldiers and artificers, under the direction of a pursuivant, whose tabard was decorated with the armorial bearings of the house of Lacy, were employed in erecting before the gate of the Garde Doloureuse one of those splendid pavilions which were employed at tournaments and other occasions of public state. It was of purple silk, valanced with gold embroidery, having the cords of the same rich materials. The doorway was formed by six lances, the staves of which were plated with silver, and the blades composed of the same precious metal. These were pitched into the ground by couples, and crossed at the top, so as to form a sort of succession of arches, which were covered by drapery of sea-green silk, forming a pleasing contrast with the purple and gold.

The interior of the tent was declared by Dame Gillian and others, whose curiosity induced them to visit it, to be of a splendor agreeing with the outside. There were Oriental carpets, and there were tapestries of Ghent and Bruges mingled in gay profusion, while the top of the pavilion, covered with sky-blue silk, was arranged so as to resemble the firmament, and richly studded with a sun, moon, and stars, composed of solid silver. This gorgeous pavilion had been made for the use of the celebrated William of Ypres, who acquired such great wealth as general of the mercenaries of King Stephen, and was by him created Earl of Albe-

marle; but the chance of war had assigned it to De Lacy, after one of the dreadful engagements so many of which occurred during the civil wars betwixt Stephen and the Empress Maude, or Matilda. The Constable had never before been known to use it; for, although wealthy and powerful, Hugo de Lacy was, on most occasions, plain and unostentatious; which, to those who knew him, made his present conduct seem the more remarkable. At the hour of noon he arrived, nobly mounted, at the gate of the castle, and drawing up a small body of servants, pages, and equerries, who attended him in their richest liveries, placed himself at their head, and directed his nephew to intimate to the Lady of the Garde Doloureuse that the humblest of her servants awaited the honor of her presence at the castle gate.

Among the spectators who witnessed his arrival, there were many who thought that some part of the state and splendor attached to his pavilion and his retinue had been better applied to set forth the person of the Constable himself, as his attire was simple even to meanness, and his person by no means of such distinguished bearing as might altogether dispense with the advantages of dress and ornament. The opinion became yet more prevalent when he descended from horseback, until which time his masterly management of the noble animal he bestrode gave a dignity to his person and figure which he lost upon dismounting from his steel saddle. In height, the celebrated Constable scarce attained the middle size, and his limbs, though strongly built and well knit, were deficient in grace and ease of movement. His legs were slightly curved outwards, which gave him advantage as a horseman, but showed unfavorably when he was upon foot. He halted, though very slightly, in consequence of one of his legs having been broken by the fall of a charger, and inartificially set by an inexperienced surgeon. This, also, was a blemish in his deportment; and though his broad shoulders, sinewy arms, and expanded chest betokened the strength which he often displayed, it was strength of a clumsy and ungraceful character. His language and gestures were those of one seldom used to converse with equals, more seldom still with superiors—short, abrupt, and decisive, almost to the verge of sternness. In the judgment of those who were habitually acquainted with the Constable, there was both dignity and kindness in his keen eye and expanded brow; but such as saw him for the first time judged less favorably, and pre-

tended to discover a harsh and passionate expression, although they allowed his countenance to have, on the whole, a bold and martial character. His age was in reality not more than five-and-forty, but the fatigues of war and of climate had added in appearance ten years to that period of time. By far the plainest dressed man of his train, he wore only a short Norman mantle over the close dress of shamoy leather, which, almost always covered by his armor, was in some places slightly soiled by its pressure. A brown hat, in which he wore a sprig of rosemary in memory of his vow, served for his head-gear; his good sword and dagger hung at a belt made of seal-skin.

Thus accoutered, and at the head of a glittering and gilded band of retainers, who watched his slightest glance, the Constable of Chester awaited the arrival of the Lady Eveline Berenger at the gate of her castle of Garde Doloureuse.

The trumpets from within announced her presence, the bridge fell, and, led by Damian de Lacy in his gayest habit, and followed by her train of females and menial or vassal attendants, she came forth in her loveliness from under the massive and antique portal of her paternal fortress. She was dressed without ornaments of any kind, and in deep mourning weeds, as best befitted her recent loss; forming, in this respect, a strong contrast with the rich attire of her conductor, whose costly dress gleamed with jewels and embroidery, while their age and personal beauty made them in every other respect the fair counterpart of each other—a circumstance which probably gave rise to the delighted murmur and buzz which passed through the bystanders on their appearance, and which only respect for the deep mourning of Eveline prevented from breaking out into shouts of applause.

The instant that the fair foot of Eveline had made a step beyond the palisades which formed the outward barrier of the castle, the Constable de Lacy came forward to meet her, and, bending his right knee to the earth, craved pardon for the discourtesy which his vow had imposed on him, while he expressed his sense of the honor with which she now graced him as one for which his life, devoted to her service, would be an inadequate acknowledgment.

The action and speech, though both in consistence with the romantic gallantry of the times, embarrassed Eveline, and the rather that this homage was so publicly rendered. She entreated the Constable to stand up, and not to add to the confusion of one who was already sufficiently at a loss

how to acquit herself of the heavy debt of gratitude which she owed him. The Constable arose accordingly, after saluting her hand, which she extended to him, and prayed her, since she was so far condescending, to deign to enter the poor hut he had prepared for her shelter, and to grant him the honor of the audience he had solicited. Eveline, without further answer than a bow, yielded him her hand, and, desiring the rest of her train to remain where they were, commanded the attendance of Rose Flammock.

"Lady," said the Constable, "the matters of which I am compelled thus hastily to speak are of a nature the most private."

"This maiden," replied Eveline, "is my bower-woman, and acquainted with my most inward thoughts; I beseech you to permit her presence at our conference."

"It were better otherwise," said Hugo de Lacy, with some embarrassment; "but your pleasure shall be obeyed."

He led the Lady Eveline into the tent, and entreated her to be seated on a large pile of cushions, covered with rich Venetian silk. Rose placed herself behind her mistress, half kneeling upon the same cushions, and watched the motions of the all-accomplished soldier and statesman, whom the voice of fame lauded so loudly, enjoying his embarrassment as a triumph of her sex, and scarcely of opinion that his shamoy doublet and square form accorded with the splendor of the scene, or the almost angelic beauty of Eveline, the other actor therein.

"Lady," said the Constable, after some hesitation, "I would willingly say what it is my lot to tell you in such terms as ladies love to listen to, and which surely your excellent beauty more especially deserves; but I have been too long trained in camps and councils to express my meaning otherwise than simply and plainly."

"I shall the more easily understand you, my lord," said Eveline, trembling, though she scarce knew why.

"My story, then, must be a blunt one. Something there passed between your honorable father and myself, touching a union of our houses." He paused, as if he wished or expected Eveline to say something, but, as she was silent, he proceeded. "I would to God that, as he was at the beginning of this treaty, it had pleased Heaven he should have conducted and concluded it with his usual wisdom; but what remedy? he has gone the path which we must all tread."

"Your lordship," said Eveline, "has nobly avenged the death of your noble friend."

"I have but done my devoir, lady, as a good knight in defense of an endangered maiden, a Lord Marcher in protection of the frontier, and a friend in avenging his friend. But to the point. Our long and noble line draws near to a close. Of my remote kinsman, Randal Lacy, I will not speak; for in him I see nothing that is good or hopeful, nor have we been at one for many years. My nephew, Damian, gives hopeful promise to be a worthy branch of our ancient tree; but he is scarce twenty years old, and hath a long career of adventure and peril to encounter ere he can honorably propose to himself the duties of domestic privacy or matrimonial engagements. His mother also is English, some abatement perhaps in the escutcheon of his arms; yet, had ten years more passed over him with the honors of chivalry, I should have proposed Damian de Lacy for the happiness to which I at present myself aspire."

"You—you, my lord! it is impossible!" said Eveline, endeavoring at the same time to suppress all that could be offensive in the surprise which she could not help exhibiting.

"I do not wonder," replied the Constable, calmly, for, the ice now being broken, he resumed the natural steadiness of his manner and character—"that you express surprise at this daring proposal. I have not perhaps the form that pleases a lady's eye, and I have forgotten—that is, if ever I knew them—the terms and phrases which please a lady's ear; but, noble Eveline, the lady of Hugo de Lacy will be one of the foremost among the matronage of England."

"It will the better become the individual to whom so high a dignity is offered," said Eveline, "to consider how far she is capable of discharging its duties."

"Of that I fear nothing," said De Lacy. "She who hath been so excellent a daughter cannot be less estimable in every other relation in life."

"I do not find that confidence in myself, my lord," replied the embarrassed maiden, "with which you are so willing to load me. And I—forgive me—must crave time for other inquiries as well as those which respect myself."

"Your father, noble lady, had this union warmly at heart. This scroll, signed with his own hand, will show it." He bent his knee as he gave the paper. "The wife of De Lacy will have, as the daughter of Raymond Berenger merits, the rank of a princess; his widow, the dowry of a queen."

"Mock me not with your knee, my lord, while you plead

to me the paternal commands, which, joined to other circumstances——" she paused, and sighed deeply—"leave me, perhaps, but little room for free-will!"

Emboldened by this answer, De Lacy, who had hitherto remained on his knee, rose gently, and assuming a seat beside the Lady Eveline, continued to press his suit—not, indeed, in the language of passion, but of a plain-spoken man, eagerly urging a proposal on which his happiness depended. The vision of the miraculous image was, it may be supposed, uppermost in the mind of Eveline, who, tied down by the solemn vow she had made on that occasion, felt herself constrained to return evasive answers, where she might perhaps have given a direct negative, had her own wishes alone been to decide her reply.

"You cannot," she said, "expect from me, my lord, in this my so recent orphan state, that I should come to a speedy determination upon an affair of such deep importance. Give me leisure of your nobleness for consideration with myself—for consultation with my friends."

"Alas! fair Eveline," said the baron, "do not be offended at my urgency. I cannot long delay setting forward on a distant and perilous expedition; and the short time left me for soliciting your favor must be an apology for my importunity."

"And is it in these circumstances, noble De Lacy, that you would encumber yourself with family ties?" asked the maiden, timidly.

"I am God's soldier," said the Constable, "and He in whose cause I fight in Palestine will defend my wife in England."

"Hear then my present answer, my Lord," said Eveline Berenger, rising from her seat. "To-morrow I proceed to the Benedictine nunnery at Gloucester, where resides my honored father's sister, who is abbess of that reverend house. To her guidance I will commit myself in this matter."

"A fair and maidenly resolution," answered De Lacy, who seemed, on his part, rather glad that the conference was abridged, "and, as I trust, not altogether unfavorable to the suit of your humble suppliant, since the good lady abbess hath been long my honored friend." He then turned to Rose, who was about to attend her lady. "Pretty maiden," he said, offering a chain of gold, "let this carcanet encircle thy neck and buy thy good-will."

"My good-will cannot be purchased, my lord," said Rose, putting back the gift which he proffered.

"Your fair word then," said the Constable, again pressing it upon her.

"Fair words are easily bought," said Rose, still rejecting the chain, "but they are seldom worth the purchase-money."

"Do you scorn my proffer, damsel?" said De Lacy; "it has graced the neck of a Norman count."

"Give it to a Norman countess, then, my lord," said the damsel. "I am plain Rose Flammock, the weaver's daughter. I keep my good word to go with my good-will, and a latten chain will become me as well as beaten gold."

"Peace, Rose," said her lady; "you are over malapert to talk thus to the Lord Constable. And you, my lord," she continued, "permit me now to depart, since you are possessed of my answer to your present proposal. I regret it had not been of some less delicate nature, that, by granting it at once, and without delay, I might have shown my sense of your services."

The lady was handed forth by the Constable of Chester with the same ceremony which had been observed at their entrance, and she returned to her own castle, sad and anxious in mind for the event of this important conference. She gathered closely around her the great mourning-veil, that the alteration of her countenance might not be observed; and, without pausing to speak even to Father Aldrovand, she instantly withdrew to the privacy of her own bower.

CHAPTER XII

Now all ye ladies of fair Scotland,
And ladies of England, that happy would prove,
Marry never for houses, nor marry for land,
Nor marry for nothing but only love.

Family Quarrels.

When the Lady Eveline had retired into her own private chamber, Rose Flammock followed her unbidden, and proffered her assistance in removing the large veil which she had worn while she was abroad ; but the lady refused her permission, saying, "You are forward with service, maiden, when it is not required of you."

"You are displeased with me, lady !" said Rose.

"And if I am, I have cause," replied Eveline. "You know my difficulties, you know what my duty demands ; yet, instead of aiding me to make the sacrifice, you render it more difficult."

"Would I had influence to guide your path !" said Rose ; "you should find it a smooth one—ay, an honest and straight one to boot."

"How mean you, maiden !" said Eveline.

"I would have you," answered Rose, "recall the encouragement—the consent, I may almost call it—you have yielded to this proud baron. He is too great to be loved himself, too haughty to love you as you deserve. If you wed him, you wed gilded misery, and, it may be, dishonor as well as discontent."

"Remember, damsel," answered Eveline Berenger, "his services towards us."

"His services !" answered Rose. "He ventured his life for us, indeed, but so did every soldier in his host. And am I bound to wed any ruffling blade among them, because he fought when the trumpet sounded ? I wonder what is the meaning of their devoir, as they call it, when it shames them not to claim the highest reward woman can bestow, merely for discharging the duty of a gentleman by a distressed creature. A gentleman, said I ? The coarsest boor in Flanders would hardly expect thanks for doing the duty of a man by women in such a case."

"But my father's wishes?" said the young lady.

"They had reference, without doubt, to the inclination of your father's daughter," answered the attendant. "I will not do my late noble lord—may God assoilzie him!—the injustice to suppose he would have urged aught in this manner which squared not with your free choice."

"Then my vow—my fatal vow, as I had wellnigh called it," said Eveline. "May Heaven forgive me my ingratitude to my patroness!"

"Even this shakes me not," said Rose. "I will never believe our Lady of Mercy would exact such a penalty for her protection as to desire me to wed the man I could not love. She smiled, you say, upon your prayer. Go, lay at her feet these difficulties which oppress you, and see if she will not smile again. Or seek a dispensation from your vow—seek it at the expense of half of your estate—seek it at the expense of your whole property. Go a pilgrimage barefooted to Rome—do anything but give your hand where you cannot give your heart."

"You speak warmly, Rose," said Eveline, still sighing as she spoke.

"Alas! my sweet lady, I have cause. Have I not seen a household where love was not—where, although there was worth and good-will, and enough of the means of life, all was embittered by regrets, which were not only vain, but criminal?"

"Yet, methinks, Rose, a sense of what is due to ourselves and others may, if listened to, guide and comfort us under such feelings even as thou hast described."

"It will save us from sin, lady, but not from sorrow," answered Rose; "and wherefore should we, with our eyes open, rush into circumstances where duty must war with inclination! Why row against wind and tide, when you may as easily take advantage of the breeze?"

"Because the voyage of my life lies where winds and currents oppose me," answered Eveline. "It is my fate, Rose."

"Not unless you make it such by choice," answered Rose.

"O, could you but have seen the pale cheek, sunken eye, and dejected bearing of my poor mother! I have said too much."

"It was then your mother," said her young lady, "of whose unhappy wedlock you have spoken?"

"It was—it was," said Rose, bursting into tears. "I have exposed my own shame to save you from sorrow. Unhappy she was, though most guiltless—so unhappy, that the breach of the dyke, and the inundation in which she perished, were,

but for my sake, to her welcome as night to the weary laborer. She had a heart like yours, formed to love and to be loved; and it would be doing honor to yonder proud baron to say he had such worth as my father's. Yet was she most unhappy. O! my sweet lady, be warned, and break off this ill-omened match!"

Eveline returned the pressure with which the affectionate girl, as she clung to her hand, enforced her well-meant advice, and then muttered, with a profound sigh, "Rose, it is too late."

"Never—never," said Rose, looking eagerly round the room. "Where are those writing-materials? Let me bring Father Aldrovand, and instruct him for your pleasure; or stay, the good father hath himself an eye on the splendors of the world which he thinks he has abandoned—he will be no safe secretary. I will go myself to the Lord Constable; *me* his rank cannot dazzle, or his wealth bribe, or his power overawe. I will tell him he doth no knightly part towards you, to press his contract with your father in such an hour of helpless sorrow; no pious part, in delaying the execution of his vows for the purpose of marrying or giving in marriage; no honest part, to press himself on a maiden whose heart has not decided in his favor; no wise part to marry one whom he must presently abandon either to solitude or to the dangers of a profligate court."

"You have not courage for such an embassy, Rose," said her mistress, sadly smiling through her tears at her youthful attendant's zeal.

"Not courage for it! and wherefore not? Try me," answered the Flemish maiden, in return. "I am neither Saracen or Welshman: his lance and sword scare me not. I follow not his banner: his voice of command concerns me not. I could, with your leave, boldly tell him he is a selfish man, veiling with fair and honorable pretext his pursuit of objects which concern his own pride and gratification, and founding high claims on having rendered the services which common humanity demanded. And all for what? Forsooth, the great De Lacy must have an heir to his noble house, and his fair nephew is not good enough to be his representative, because his mother was of Anglo-Saxon strain, and the real heir must be pure unmixed Norman; and for this Lady Evelina Berenger, in the first bloom of youth, must be wedded to a man who might be her father, and who, after leaving her unprotected for years, will return in such guise as might beseem her grandfather!"

"Since he is thus scrupulous concerning purity of lineage," said Eveline. "perhaps he may call to mind—what so good a herald as he is cannot fail to know—that I am of Saxon strain by my father's mother."

"Oh," replied Rose, "he will forgive that blot in the heiress of the Garde Doloureuse."

"Fie, Rose," answered her mistress, "thou dost him wrong in taxing him with avarice."

"Perhaps so," answered Rose; "but he is undeniably ambitious; and avarice, I have heard, is ambition's bastard brother, though ambition be sometimes ashamed of the relationship."

"You speak too boldly, damsel," said Eveline; "and, while I acknowledge your affection, it becomes me to check your mode of expression."

"Nay, take that tone, and I have done," said Rose. "To Eveline, whom I love, and who loves me, I can speak freely; but to the Lady of the Garde Doloureuse, the proud Norman damsel—which when you choose to be you can be—I can courtesy as low as my station demands, and speak as little truth as she cares to hear."

"Thou art a wild but a kind girl," said Eveline, "no one who did not know thee would think that soft and childish exterior covered such a soul of fire. Thy mother must indeed have been the being of feeling and passion you paint her; for thy father—nay, nay, never arm in his defense until he be attacked—I only meant to say, that his solid sense and sound judgment are his most distinguished qualities."

"And I would you would avail yourself of them, lady," said Rose.

"In fitting things I will; but he were rather an unmeet counselor in that which we now treat of," said Eveline.

"You mistake him," answered Rose Flammock, "and underrate his value. Sound judgment is like to the graduated measuring-wand, which, though usually applied only to coarser cloths, will give with equal truth the dimensions of Indian silk or of cloth of gold."

"Well—well, this affair presses not instantly at least," said the young lady. "Leave me now, Rose, and send Gillian, the tirewoman, hither; I have directions to give about the packing and removal of my wardrobe."

"That Gillian the tirewoman hath been a mighty favorite of late," said Rose; "time was when it was otherwise."

"I like her manners as little as thou dost," said Eveline; "but she is old Raoul's wife; she was a sort of half-favorite

with my dear father, who, like other men, was perhaps taken by that very freedom which we think unseemly in persons of our sex; and then there is no other woman in the castle that hath such skill in empacketing clothes without the risk of their being injured."

"That last reason alone," said Rose, smiling, "is, I admit, an irresistible pretension to favor, and Dame Gillian shall presently attend you. But take my advice, lady: keep her to her bales and her mails, and let her not prate to you on what concerns her not."

So saying, Rose left the apartment, and her young lady looked after her in silence, then murmured to herself—"Rose loves me truly; but she would willingly be more of the mistress than the maiden; and then she is somewhat jealous of every other person that approaches me. It is strange that I have not seen Damian de Lacy since my interview with the Constable. He anticipates, I suppose, the chance of his finding in me a severe aunt!"

But the domestics, who crowded for orders with reference to her removal early on the morrow, began now to divert the current of their lady's thoughts from the consideration of her own particular situation, which, as the prospect presented nothing pleasant, with the elastic spirit of youth, she willingly postponed till further leisure.

CHAPTER XIII

Too much rest is rust,
  There's ever cheer in changing ;
We tyne by too much trust,
  So we'll be up and ranging.
Old Song.

EARLY on the subsequent morning, a gallant company, saddened indeed by the deep mourning which their principals wore, left the well-defended Castle of the Garde Doloureuse, which had been so lately the scene of such remarkable events.

The sun was just beginning to exhale the heavy dews which had fallen during the night, and to disperse the thin gray mist which eddied around towers and battlements, when Wilkin Flammock, with six cross-bowmen on horseback, and as many spearmen on foot, sallied forth from under the Gothic gateway, and crossed the sounding drawbridge. After this advanced guard came four household servants well mounted, and after them as many inferior female attendants, all in mourning. Then rode forth the young Lady Eveline herself, occupying the center of the little procession, and her long black robes formed a striking contrast to the color of her milk-white palfrey. Beside her, on a Spanish jennet, the gift of her affectionate father—who had procured it at a high rate, and who would have given half his substance to gratify his daughter—sat the girlish form of Rose Flammock, who had so much of juvenile shyness in her manner, so much of feeling and of judgment in her thoughts and actions. Dame Margery followed, mixed in the party escorted by Father Aldrovand, whose company she chiefly frequented ; for Margery affected a little the character of the devotee, and her influence in the family, as having been Eveline's nurse, was so great as to render her no improper companion for the chaplain, when her lady did not require her attendance on her own person. Then came old Raoul the huntsman, his wife, and two or three other officers of Raymond Berenger's household ; the steward, with his golden chain, velvet cassock, and white wand, bringing up the rear, which was closed by a small band of archers and four men-

at-arms. The guards, and indeed the greater part of the attendants, were only designed to give the necessary degree of honor to the young lady's movements, by accompanying her a short space from the castle, where they were met by the Constable of Chester, who, with a retinue of thirty lances, proposed himself to escort Eveline as far as Gloucester, the place of her destination. Under his protection no danger was to be apprehended, even if the severe defeat so lately sustained by the Welsh had not of itself been likely to prevent any attempt, on the part of those hostile mountaineers, to disturb the safety of the marches for some time to come.

In pursuance of this arrangement, which permitted the armed part of Eveline's retinue to return for the protection of the castle, and the restoration of order in the district around, the Constable awaited her at the fatal bridge, at the head of the gallant band of selected horsemen whom he had ordered to attend upon him. The parties halted, as if to salute each other ; but the Constable, observing that Eveline drew her veil more closely around her, and recollecting the loss she had so lately sustained on that luckless spot, had the judgment to confine his greeting to a mute reverence, so low that the lofty plume which he wore (for he was now in complete armor) mingled with the flowing mane of his gallant horse. Wilkin Flammock next halted, to ask the lady if she had any farther commands.

"None, good Wilkin," said Eveline ; "but to be, as ever, true and watchful."

"The properties of a good mastiff," said Flammock. "Some rude sagacity, and a stout hand instead of a sharp case of teeth, are all that I can claim to be added to them. I will do my best. Fare thee well, Roschen ! Thou art going among strangers ; forget not the qualities which made thee loved at home. The saints bless thee—farewell !"

The steward next approached to take his leave, but in doing so, had nearly met with a fatal accident. It had been the pleasure of Raoul, who was in his own disposition cross-grained, and in person rheumatic, to accommodate himself with an old Arab horse, which had been kept for the sake of the breed, as lean, and almost as lame, as himself, and with a temper as vicious as that of a fiend. Betwixt the rider and the horse was a constant misunderstanding, testified on Raoul's part by oaths, rough checks with the curb, and severe digging with the spurs, which Mahound (so paganishly was the horse named)

answered by plunging, bounding, and endeavoring by all expedients to unseat his rider, as well as striking and lashing out furiously at whatever else approached him. It was thought by many of the household that Raoul preferred this vicious, cross-tempered animal upon all occasions when he traveled in company with his wife, in order to take advantage by the chance that, amongst the various kicks, plunges, gambades, lashings out, and other eccentricities of Mahound, his heels might come in contact with Dame Gillian's ribs. And now, when as the important steward spurred up his palfrey to kiss his young lady's hand, and to take his leave, it seemed to the bystanders as if Raoul so managed his bridle and spur, that Mahound jerked out his hoofs at the same moment, one of which coming in contact with the steward's thigh, would have splintered it like a rotten reed, had the parties been a couple of inches nearer to each other. As it was, the steward sustained considerable damage ; and they that observed the grin upon Raoul's vinegar countenance entertained little doubt that Mahound's heels then and there avenged certain nods, winks, and wreathed smiles which had passed betwixt the gold-chained functionary and the coquettish tirewoman since the party left the castle.

This incident abridged the painful solemnity of parting betwixt the Lady Eveline and her dependants, and lessened at the same time the formality of her meeting with the Constable, and, as it were, resigning herself to his protection.

Hugo de Lacy, having commanded six of his men-at-arms to proceed as an advanced guard, remained himself to see the steward properly deposited on a litter, and then, with the rest of his followers, marched in military fashion about one hundred yards in the rear of Lady Eveline and her retinue, judiciously forbearing to present himself to her society while she was engaged in the orisons which the place where they met naturally suggested, and waiting patiently until the elasticity of youthful temper should require some diversion of the gloomy thoughts which the scene inspired.

Guided by this policy, the Constable did not approach the ladies until the advance of the morning rendered it politeness to remind them that a pleasant spot for breaking their fast occurred in the neighborhood, where he had ventured to make some preparations for rest and refreshment. Immediately after the Lady Eveline had intimated her acceptance of this courtesy, they came in sight of the spot he alluded to, marked by an ancient oak, which, spreading its broad branches far and wide, reminded the traveler of that of

Mamre, under which celestial beings accepted the hospitality of the patriarch. Across two of these huge protecting arms was flung a piece of rose-colored sarsnet, as a canopy to keep off the morning beams, which were already rising high. Cushions of silk, interchanged with others covered with the furs of animals of the chase, were arranged round a repast which a Norman cook had done his utmost to distinguish, by the superior delicacy of his art, from the gross meals of the Saxons, and the penurious simplicity of the Welsh tables. A fountain which bubbled from under a large mossy stone at some distance, refreshed the air with its sound, and the taste with its liquid crystal; while, at the same time, it formed a cistern for cooling two or three flasks of Gascon wine and hippocras, which were at that time the necessary accompaniments of the morning meal.

When Eveline, with Rose, the confessor and at some farther distance her faithful nurse, was seated at this sylvan banquet, the leaves rustling to a gentle breeze, the water bubbling in the background, the birds twittering around, while the half-heard sounds of conversation and laughter at a distance announced that their guard was in the vicinity, she could not avoid making the Constable some natural compliment on his happy selection of a place of repose.

"You do me more than justice," replied the baron: "the spot was selected by my nephew, who hath a fancy like a minstrel. Myself am but slow in imagining such devices."

Rose looked full at her mistress, as if she endeavored to look into her very inmost soul; but Eveline answered with the utmost simplicity—"And wherefore hath not the noble Damian waited to join us at the entertainment which he hath directed?"

"He preferred riding onward," said the baron, "with some light horsemen; for, notwithstanding there are now no Welsh knaves stirring, yet the marches are never free from robbers and outlaws; and though there is nothing to fear for a band like ours, yet you should not be alarmed even by the approach of danger."

"I have indeed seen but too much of it lately," said Eveline; and relapsed into the melancholy mood from which the novelty of the scene had for a moment awakened her.

Meanwhile, the Constable, removing, with the assistance of his squire, his mailed hood and his steel crest, as well as his gauntlets, remained in his flexible coat of mail, composed entirely of rings of steel curiously interwoven, his hands bare, and his brows covered with a velvet bonnet of a peculiar

fashion, appropriated to the use of knights, and called a *mortier*, which permitted him both to converse and to eat more easily than when he wore the full defensive armor. His discourse was plain, sensible, and manly; and, turning upon the state of the country, and the precautions to be observed for governing and defending so disorderly a frontier, it became gradually interesting to Eveline, one of whose warmest wishes was to be the protectress of her father's vassals. De Lacy, on his part, seemed much pleased; for, young as Eveline was, her questions showed intelligence, and her mode of answering both apprehension and docility. In short, familiarity was so far established betwixt them that, in the next stage of their journey, the Constable seemed to think his appropriate place was at the Lady Eveline's bridle-rein; and although she certainly did not countenance his attendance, yet neither did she seem willing to discourage it. Himself no ardent lover, although captivated both with the beauty and the amiable qualities of the fair orphan, De Lacy was satisfied with being endured as a companion, and made no efforts to improve the opportunity which this familiarity afforded him, by recurring to any of the topics of the preceding day.

A halt was made at noon in a small village, where the same purveyor had made preparations for their accommodation, and particularly for that of the Lady Eveline; but, something to her surprise, he himself remained invisible. The conversation of the Constable of Chester was, doubtless, in the highest degree instructive; but at Eveline's years a maiden might be excused for wishing some addition to the society in the person of a younger and less serious attendant; and when she recollected the regularity with which Damian Lacy had hitherto made his respects to her, she rather wondered at his continued absence. But her reflection went no deeper than the passing thought of one who was not quite so much delighted with her present company as not to believe it capable of an agreeable addition. She was lending a patient ear to the account which the Constable gave her of the descent and pedigree of a gallant knight of the distinguished family of Herbert, at whose castle he purposed to repose during the night, when one of the retinue announced a messenger from the Lady of Baldringham.

"My honored father's aunt," said Eveline, arising to testify that respect for age and relationship which the manners of the time required.

"I knew not," said the Constable, "that my gallant friend had such a relative."

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"She was my grandmother's sister," answered Eveline, "a noble Saxon lady; but she disliked the match formed with a Norman house, and never saw her sister after the period of her marriage."

She broke off, as the messenger, who had the appearance of the steward of a person of consequence, entered their presence, and, bending his knee reverently, delivered a letter, which, being examined by Father Aldrovand, was found to contain the following invitation, expressed, not in French, then the general language of communication amongst the gentry, but in the old Saxon language, modified as it now was by some intermixture of French :—

"If the grand-daughter of Aelfreid of Baldringham hath so much of the old Saxon strain as to desire to see an ancient relation, who still dwells in the house of her forefathers and lives after their manner, she is thus invited to repose for the night in the dwelling of Ermengarde of Baldringham."

"Your pleasure will be, doubtless, to decline the present hospitality?" said the Constable de Lacy. "The noble Herbert expects us, and has made great preparation."

"Your presence, my lord," said Eveline, "will more than console him for my absence. It is fitting and proper that I should meet my aunt's advances to reconciliation, since she has condescended to make them."

De Lacy's brow was slightly clouded, for seldom had he met with anything approaching to contradiction of his pleasure. "I pray you to reflect, Lady Eveline," he said, "that your aunt's house is probably defenseless, or at least very imperfectly guarded. Would it not be your pleasure that I should continue my dutiful attendance?"

"Of that, my lord, mine aunt can, in her own house, be the sole judge; and methinks, as she has not deemed it necessary to request the honor of your lordship's company, it were unbecoming in me to permit you to take the trouble of attendance: you have already had but too much on my account."

"But for the sake of your own safety, madam," said De Lacy, unwilling to leave his charge.

"My safety, my lord, cannot be endangered in the house of so near a relative; whatever precautions she may take on her own behalf will doubtless be amply sufficient for mine."

"I hope it will be found so," said De Lacy; "and I will at lest add to them the security of a patrol around the castle

during your abode in it." He stopped, and then proceeded with some hesitation to express his hope that Eveline, now about to visit a kinswoman whose prejudices against the Norman race were generally known, would be on her guard against what she might hear upon that subject.

Eveline answered with dignity, that the daughter of Raymond Berenger was unlikely to listen to any opinions which would affect the dignity of that good knight's nation and descent ; and with this assurance the Constable, finding it impossible to obtain any which had more special reference to himself and his suit, was compelled to remain satisfied. He recollected also that the castle of Herbert was within two miles of the habitation of the Lady of Baldringham, and that his separation from Eveline was but for one night ; yet a sense of the difference betwixt their years, and perhaps of his own deficiency in those lighter qualifications by which the female heart is supposed to be most frequently won, rendered even this temporary absence matter of anxious thought and apprehension ; so that, during their afternoon journey, he rode in silence by Eveline's side, rather meditating what might chance to-morrow than endeavoring to avail himself of present opportunity. In this unsocial manner they traveled on until the point was reached where they were to separate for the evening.

This was an elevated spot, from which they could see, on the right hand, the castle of Amelot [William] Herbert, rising high upon an eminence, with all its Gothic pinnacles and turrets ; and on the left, low-embowered amongst oaken woods, the rude and lonely dwelling in which the Lady of Baldringham still maintained the customs of the Anglo-Saxons, and looked with contempt and hatred on all innovations that had been introduced since the battle of Hastings.

Here the Constable De Lacy, having charged a part of his men to attend the Lady Eveline to the house of her relation, and to keep watch around it with the utmost vigilance, but at such a distance as might not give offense or inconvenience to the family, kissed her hand, and took a reluctant leave. Eveline proceeded onwards by a path so little trodden as to show the solitary condition of the mansion to which it led. Large kine, of an uncommon and valuable breed, were feeding in the rich pastures around ; and now and then fallow deer, which appeared to have lost the shyness of their nature, tripped across the glades of the woodland, or stood and lay in small groups under some great oak. The transient

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Eveline answered with dignity, that the daughter of Raymond Berenger was unlikely to listen to any opinions which would affect the dignity of that good knight's nation and descent ; and with this assurance the Constable, finding it impossible to obtain any which had more special reference to himself and his suit, was compelled to remain satisfied. He recollected also that the castle of Herbert was within two miles of the habitation of the Lady of Baldringham, and that his separation from Eveline was but for one night ; yet a sense of the difference betwixt their years, and perhaps of his own deficiency in those lighter qualifications by which the female heart is supposed to be most frequently won, rendered even this temporary absence matter of anxious thought and apprehension ; so that, during their afternoon journey, he rode in silence by Eveline's side, rather meditating what might chance to-morrow than endeavoring to avail himself of present opportunity. In this unsocial manner they traveled on until the point was reached where they were to separate for the evening.

This was an elevated spot, from which they could see, on the right hand, the castle of Amelot [William] Herbert, rising high upon an eminence, with all its Gothic pinnacles and turrets ; and on the left, low-embowered amongst oaken woods, the rude and lonely dwelling in which the Lady of Baldringham still maintained the customs of the Anglo-Saxons, and looked with contempt and hatred on all innovations that had been introduced since the battle of Hastings.

Here the Constable De Lacy, having charged a part of his men to attend the Lady Eveline to the house of her relation, and to keep watch around it with the utmost vigilance, but at such a distance as might not give offense or inconvenience to the family, kissed her hand, and took a reluctant leave. Eveline proceeded onwards by a path so little trodden as to show the solitary condition of the mansion to which it led. Large kine, of an uncommon and valuable breed, were feeding in the rich pastures around ; and now and then fallow deer, which appeared to have lost the shyness of their nature, tripped across the glades of the woodland, or stood and lay in small groups under some great oak. The transient

pleasure which such a scene of rural quiet was calculated to afford changed to more serious feelings, when a sudden turn brought her at once in front of the mansion-house, of which she had seen nothing since she first beheld it from the point where she parted with the Constable, and which she had more than one reason for regarding with some apprehension.

The house, for it could not be termed a castle, was only two stories high, low and massively built, with doors and windows forming the heavy round arch which is usually called Saxon ; the walls were mantled with various creeping plants, which had crept along them undisturbed ; grass grew up to the very threshold, at which hung a buffalo's horn, suspended by a brass chain. A massive door of black oak closed a gate, which much resembled the ancient entrance of a ruined sepulcher, and not a soul appeared to acknowledge or greet their arrival.

"Were I you, my Lady Eveline," said the officious Dame Gillian, "I would turn bridle yet ; for this old dungeon seems little likely to afford food or shelter to Christian folks."

Eveline imposed silence on her indiscreet attendant, though herself exchanging a look with Rose which confessed something like timidity, as she commanded Raoul to blow the horn at the gate. "I have heard," she said, "that my aunt loves the ancient customs so well, that she is loth to admit into her halls anything younger than the time of Edward the Confessor."

Raoul, in the mean time, cursing the rude instrument which baffled his skill in sounding a regular call, and gave voice only to a tremendous and discordant roar, which seemed to shake the old walls, thick as they were, repeated his summons three times before they obtained admittance. On the third sounding, the gate opened, and a numerous retinue of servants of both sexes appeared in the dark and narrow hall, at the upper end of which a great fire of wood was sending its furnace-blast up an antique chimney, whose front, as extensive as that of a modern kitchen, was carved over with ornaments of massive stone, and garnished on the top with a long range of niches, from each of which frowned the image of some Saxon saint, whose barbarous name was scarce to be found in the Romish calendar.

The same officer who had brought the invitation from his lady to Eveline now stepped forward, as she supposed, to assist her from her palfrey ; but it was in reality to lead it by the bridle-rein into the paved hall itself, and up to a raised platform, or dais, at the upper end of which she was

at length permitted to dismount. Two matrons of advanced years, and four young women of gentle birth, educated by the bounty of Ermengarde, attended with reverence the arrival of her kinswoman. Eveline would have inquired of them for her grand-aunt, but the matrons with much respect laid their fingers on their mouths, as if to enjoin her silence —a gesture which, united to the singularity of her reception in other respects, still further excited her curiosity to see her venerable relative.

It was soon gratified ; for through a pair of folding-doors, which opened not far from the platform on which she stood, she was ushered into the large low apartment hung with arras ; at the upper end of which, under a species of canopy, was seated the ancient Lady of Baldringham. Fourscore years had not quenched the brightness of her eyes, or bent an inch of her stately height ; her gray hair was still so profuse as to form a tier, combined as it was with a chaplet of ivy leaves ; her long dark-colored gown fell in ample folds, and the broidered girdle, which gathered it around her, was fastened by a buckle of gold, studded with precious stones, which were worth an earl's ransom ; her features, which had once been beautiful, or rather majestic, bore still, though faded and wrinkled, an air of melancholy and stern grandeur, that assorted well with her garb and deportment. She had a staff of ebony in her hand ; at her feet rested a large aged wolf-dog, who pricked his ears and bristled up his neck as the step of a stranger, a sound so seldom heard in those halls, approached the chair in which his aged mistress sat motionless.

"Peace, Thryme," said the venerable dame ; "and thou, daughter of the house of Baldringham, approach, and fear not their ancient servant."

The hound sunk down to his couchant posture when she spoke, and, excepting the red glare of his eyes, might have seemed a hieroglyphical emblem, lying at the feet of some ancient priestess of Woden or Freya ; so strongly did the appearance of Ermengarde, with her rod and her chaplet, correspond with the ideas of the days of paganism. Yet he who had thus deemed of her would have done therein much injustice to a venerable Christian matron, who had given many a hide of land to holy church, in honor of God and St. Dunstan.

Ermengarde's reception of Eveline was of the same antiquated and formal cast with her mansion and her exterior. She did not at first arise from her seat when the noble maiden

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approached her, nor did she even admit her to the salute which she advanced to offer; but laying her hand on Eveline's arm, stopped her as she advanced, and perused her countenance with an earnest and unsparing eye of minute observation.

"Berwine," she said to the most favored of the two attendants, "our niece hath the skin and eyes of the Saxon hue; but the hue of her eyebrows and hair is from the foreigner and alien. Thou art, nevertheless, welcome to my house, maiden," she added, addressing Eveline, "especially if thou canst bear to hear that thou art not absolutely a perfect creature, as doubtless these flatterers around thee have taught thee to believe."

So saying, she at length arose, and saluted her niece with a kiss on the forehead. She released her not, however, from her grasp, but proceeded to give the attention to her garments which she had hitherto bestowed upon her features.

"St. Dunstan keep us from vanity!" she said; "and so this is the new guise, and modest maidens wear such tunics as these, showing the shape of their persons as plain as if—St. Mary defend us!—they were altogether without garments! And see, Berwine, these gauds on the neck, and that neck itself uncovered as low as the shoulder—these be the guises which strangers have brought into merry England! and this pouch, like a player's placket, hath but little to do with housewifery, I wot; and that dagger, too, like a gleeman's wife, that rides a-mumming in masculine apparel; dost thou ever go to the wars, maiden, that thou wearest steel at thy girdle?"

Eveline, equally surprised and disobliged by the depreciating catalogue of her apparel, replied to the last question with some spirit. "The mode may have altered, madam; but I only wear such garments as are now worn by those of my age and condition. For the poniard, may it please you, it is not many days since I regarded it as the last resource betwixt me and dishonor."

"The maiden speaks well and boldly, Berwine," said Dame Ermengarde; "and in truth, pass we but over some of these vain fripperies, is attired in a comely fashion. Thy father, I hear, fell knight-like in the field of battle."

"He did so," answered Eveline, her eyes filling with tears at the recollection of her recent loss.

"I never saw him," continued Dame Ermengarde; "he carried the old Norman scorn towards the Saxon stock, whom they wed but for what they can make by them, as

the bramble clings to the elm; nay, never seek to vindicate him," she continued, observing that Eveline was about to speak, "I have known the Norman spirit for many a year ere thou wert born."

At this moment the steward appeared in the chamber, and, after a long genuflection, asked his lady's pleasure concerning the guard of Norman soldiers who remained without the mansion.

"Norman soldiers so near the house of Baldringham!" said the old lady, fiercely. "Who brings them hither, and for what purpose?"

"They came, as I think," said the sewer, "to wait on and guard this gracious young lady."

"What, my daughter," said Ermengarde, in a tone of melancholy reproach, "darest thou not trust thyself unguarded for one night in the castle of thy forefathers?"

"God forbid else!" said Eveline. "But these men are not mine, nor under my authority. They are part of the train of the Constable De Lacy, who left them to watch around the castle, thinking there might be danger from robbers."

"Robbers," said Ermengarde, "have never harmed the house of Baldringham since a Norman robber stole from it its best treasure in the person of thy grandmother. And so, poor bird, thou art already captive—unhappy flutterer! But it is thy lot, and wherefore should I wonder or repine? When was there fair maiden with a wealthy dower, but she was ere maturity destined to be the slave of some of those petty kings, who allow us to call nothing ours that their passions can covet? Well, I cannot aid thee: I am but a poor and neglected woman, feeble both from sex and age. And to which of these De Lacys art thou the destined household drudge?"

A question so asked, and by one whose prejudices were of such a determined character, was not likely to draw from Eveline any confession of the real circumstances in which she was placed, since it was but too plain her Saxon relation could have afforded her neither sound counsel nor useful assistance. She replied therefore briefly, that as the Lacys, and the Normans in general, were unwelcome to her kinswoman, she would entreat of the commander of the patrol to withdraw it from the neighborhood of Baldringham.

"Not so, my niece," said the old lady; "as we cannot escape the Norman neighborhood, or get beyond the sound of their curfew, it signifies not whether they be near our

walls or more far off, so that they enter them not. And, Berwine, bid Hundwolf drench the Normans with liquor and gorge them with food—food of the best and liquor of the strongest. Let them not say the old Saxon hag is churlish of her hospitality. Broach a piece of wine, for I warrant their gentle stomachs brook no ale."

Berwine, her huge bunch of keys jangling at her girdle, withdrew to give the necessary directions, and presently returned.

Meanwhile Ermengarde proceeded to question her niece more closely. "Is it that thou wilt not, or canst not, tell me to which of the De Lacys thou art to be bondswoman? To the overweening Constable, who, sheathed in impenetrable armor, and mounted on a swift and strong horse as invulnerable as himself, takes pride that he rides down and stabs at his ease, and with perfect safety, the naked Welshmen? Or is it to his nephew, the beardless Damian? Or must thy possession go to mend a breach in the fortunes of that other cousin, Randal Lacy, the decayed reveler, who, they say, can no longer ruffle it among the debauched crusaders for want of means?"

"My honored aunt," replied Eveline, naturally displeased with this discourse, "to none of the Lacys, and I trust to none other, Saxon or Norman, will your kinswoman become a household drudge. There was, before the death of my honored father, some treaty betwixt him and the Constable, on which account I cannot at present decline his attendance; but what may be the issue of it, fate must determine."

"But I can show thee, niece, how the balance of fate inclines," said Ermengarde, in a low and mysterious voice. "Those united with us by blood have, in some sort, the privilege of looking forward beyond the points of present time, and seeing in their very bud the thorns or flowers which are one day to encircle their head."

"For my own sake, noble kinswoman," answered Eveline, "I would decline such foreknowledge, even were it possible to acquire it without transgressing the rules of the church. Could I have foreseen what has befallen me within these last unhappy days, I had lost the enjoyment of every happy moment before that time."

"Nevertheless, daughter," said the Lady of Baldringham, "thou, like others of thy race, must within this house conform to the rule of passing one night within the chamber of the Red-Finger. Berwine, see that it be prepared for my niece's reception."

"I—I—have heard speak of that chamber, gracious aunt," said Eveline, timidly, "and if it may consist with your good pleasure, I would not now choose to pass the night there. My health has suffered by my late perils and fatigues, and with your good-will I will delay to another time the usage, which I have heard is peculiar to the daughters of the house of Baldringham."

"And which, notwithstanding, you would willingly avoid," said the old Saxon lady, bending her brows angrily. "Has not such disobedience cost your house enough already?"

"Indeed, honored and gracious lady," said Berwine, unable to forbear interference, though well knowing the obstinacy of her patroness, "that chamber is in disrepair, and cannot easily on a sudden be made fit for the Lady Eveline; and the noble damsel looks so pale, and hath lately suffered so much, that, might I have the permission to advise, this were better delayed."

"Thou art a fool, Berwine," said the old lady, sternly; "thinkest thou I will bring anger and misfortune on my house, by suffering this girl to leave it without rendering the usual homage to the Red-Finger? Go to, let the room be made ready: small preparation may serve, if she cherish not the Norman nicety about bed and lodging. Do not reply, but do as I command thee. And you, Eveline, are you so far degenerated from the brave spirit of your ancestry, that you dare not pass a few hours in an ancient apartment?"

"You are my hostess, gracious madam," said Eveline, "and must assign my apartment where you judge proper; my courage is such as innocence and some pride of blood and birth have given me. It has been, of late, severely tried; but, since such is your pleasure, and the custom of your house, my heart is yet strong enough to encounter what you propose to subject me to."

She paused here in displeasure; for she resented, in some measure, her aunt's conduct, as unkind and inhospitable. And yet, when she reflected upon the foundation of the legend of the chamber to which she was consigned, she could not but regard the Lady of Baldringham as having considerable reason for her conduct, according to the traditions of the family, and the belief of the times, in which Eveline herself was devout.

CHAPTER XIV

Sometimes, methinks, I hear the groans of ghosts,
Then hollow sounds and lamentable screams,
Then, like a dying echo from afar,
My mother's voice, that cries, "Wed not, Almeyda;
Forewarned, Almeyda, marriage is thy crime."

Don Sebastian.

THE evening at Baldringham would have seemed of portentous and unendurable length, had it not been that apprehended danger makes time pass quickly betwixt us and the dreaded hour, and that, if Eveline felt little interested or amused by the conversation of her aunt and Berwine, which turned upon the long deduction of their ancestors from the warlike Horsa, and the feats of Saxon champions, and the miracles of Saxon monks, she was still better pleased to listen to these legends than to anticipate her retreat to the destined and dreaded apartment where she was to pass the night. There lacked not, however, such amusement as the house of Baldringham could afford, to pass away the evening. Blessed by a grave old Saxon monk, the chaplain of the house, a sumptuous entertainment, which might have sufficed twenty hungry men, was served up before Ermengarde and her niece, whose sole assistants, besides the reverend man, were Berwine and Rose Flammock. Eveline was the less inclined to do justice to this excess of hospitality, that the dishes were all of the gross and substantial nature which the Saxons admired, but which contrasted disadvantageously with the refined and delicate cookery of the Normans, as did the moderate cup of light and high-flavored Gascon wine, tempered with more than half its quantity of the purest water, with the mighty ale, the high-spiced pigment and hippocras, and the other potent liquors, which, one after another, were in vain proffered for her acceptance by the steward Hundwolf, in honor of the hospitality of Baldringham.

Neither were the stated amusements of the evening more congenial to Eveline's taste than the profusion of her aunt's solid refection. When the boards and tresses on which the viands had been served were withdrawn from the apartment,

the menials, under direction of the steward, proceeded to light several long waxen torches, one of which was graduated for the purpose of marking the passing time, and dividing it into portions. These were announced by means of brazen balls, suspended by threads from the torch, the spaces betwixt them being calculated to occupy a certain time in burning; so that, when the flame reached the thread, and the balls fell, each in succession, into a brazen basin placed for its reception, the office of a modern clock was in some degree discharged. By this light the party was arranged for the evening.

The ancient Ermengarde's lofty and ample chair was removed, according to ancient custom, from the middle of the apartment to the warmest side of a large grate, filled with charcoal, and her guest was placed on her right, as the seat of honor. Berwine then arranged in due order the females of the household, and, having seen that each was engaged with her own proper task, sat herself down to ply the spindle and distaff. The men, in a more remote circle, betook themselves to the repairing of their implements of husbandry, or new furbishing weapons of the chase, under the direction of the steward, Hundwolf. For the amusement of the family thus assembled, an old gleeman sung to a harp, which had but four strings, a long and apparently interminable legend upon some religious subject, which was rendered almost unintelligible to Eveline by the extreme and complicated affectation of the poet, who, in order to indulge in the alliteration which was accounted one great ornament of Saxon poetry, had sacrificed sense to sound, and used words in the most forced and remote sense, provided they could be compelled into his service. There was also all the obscurity arising from elision, and from the most extravagant and hyperbolical epithets.

Eveline, though well acquainted with the Saxon language, soon left off listening to the singer, to reflect for a moment on the gay *fabliaux* and imaginative *lais* of the Norman minstrels, and then to anticipate, with anxious apprehension, what nature of visitation she might be exposed to in the mysterious chamber in which she was doomed to pass the night.

The hour of parting at length approached. At half an hour before midnight, a period ascertained by the consumption of the huge waxen torch, the ball which was secured to it fell clanging into the brazen basin placed beneath, and announced to all the hour of rest. The old gleeman paused

in his song instantaneously, and in the middle of a stanza, and the household were all on foot at the signal, some retiring to their own apartments, others lighting torches or bearing lamps to conduct the visitors to their places of repose. Among these last was a bevy of bower-women, to whom the duty was assigned of conveying the Lady Eveline to her chamber for the night. Her aunt took a solemn leave of her, crossed her forehead, kissed it, and whispered in her ear, "Be courageous, and be fortunate."

"May not my bower-maiden, Rose Flammock, or my tire-woman, Dame Gillian, Raoul's wife, remain in the apartment with me for this night?" said Eveline.

"Flammock—Raoul!" repeated Ermengarde, angrily; "is thy household thus made up? The Flemings are the cold palsy to Britain, the Normans the burning fever!"

"And the poor Welsh will add," said Rose, whose resentment began to surpass her awe for the ancient Saxon dame, "that the Anglo-Saxons were the original disease, and resemble a wasting pestilence."

"Thou art too bold, sweetheart," said the Lady Ermengarde, looking at the Flemish maiden from under her dark brows; "and yet there is wit in thy words. Saxon, Dane, and Norman have rolled like successive billows over the land, each having strength to subdue what they lacked wisdom to keep. When shall it be otherwise?"

"When Saxon, and Briton, and Norman, and Fleming," answered Rose, boldly, "shall learn to call themselves by one name, and think themselves alike children of the land they are born in."

"Ha!" exclaimed the Lady of Baldringham, in the tone of one half surprised, half pleased. Then turning to her relation, she said, "There are words and wit in this maiden; see that she use, but do not abuse, them."

"She is as kind and faithful as she is prompt and ready-witted," said Eveline. "I pray you, dearest aunt, let me use her company for this night."

"It may not be: it were dangerous to both. Alone you must learn your destiny, as have all the females of our race, excepting your grandmother; and what have been the consequences of her neglecting the rules of our house? Lo! her descendant stands before me an orphan, in the very bloom of youth."

"I will go then," said Eveline, with a sigh of resignation; "and it shall never be said I incurred future woe to shun present terror."

"Your attendants," said the Lady Ermengarde, "may occupy the anteroom, and be almost within your call. Berwine will show you the apartment; I cannot, for *we*, thou knowest, who have once entered it, return not thither again. Farewell, my child, and may Heaven bless thee!"

With more of human emotion and sympathy than she had yet shown, the lady again saluted Eveline, and signed to her to follow Berwine, who, attended by two damsels bearing torches, waited to conduct her to the dreaded apartment.

Their torches glared along the rudely-built walls and dark arched roofs of one or two long winding passages; these by their light enabled them to descend the steps of a winding stair, whose inequality and ruggedness showed its antiquity; and finally led into a tolerably large chamber on the lower story of the edifice, to which some old hangings, a lively fire on the hearth, the moonbeams stealing through a latticed window, and the boughs of a myrtle plant which grew around the casement, gave no uncomfortable appearance.

"This," said Berwine, is the resting-place of your attendants," and she pointed to the couches which had been prepared for Rose and Dame Gillian; "we," she added, "proceed farther."

She then took a torch from the attendant maidens, both of whom seemed to shrink back with fear, which was readily caught by Dame Gillian, although she was not probably aware of the cause. But Rose Flammock, unbidden, followed her mistress without hesitation, as Berwine conducted her through a small wicket at the upper end of the apartment, clenched with many an iron nail, into a second but smaller anteroom or wardrobe, at the end of which was a similar door. This wardrobe had also its casements mantled with evergreens, and, like the former, it was faintly enlightened by the moonbeam.

Berwine paused here, and, pointing to Rose, demanded of Eveline, "Why does *she* follow?"

"To share my mistress's danger, be it what it may," answered Rose, with her characteristic readiness of speech and resolution. "Speak," she said, "my dearest lady," grasping Eveline's hand, while she addressed her; "you will not drive your Rose from you? If I am less high-minded than one of your boasted race, I am bold and quick-witted in all honest service. You tremble like the aspen! Do not go into this apartment; do not be gulled by all this pomp and mystery of terrible preparation; bid defiance to this antiquated, and, I think, half-pagan, superstition."

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Their torches glared along the rudely-built walls and dark arched roofs of one or two long winding passages; these by their light enabled them to descend the steps of a winding stair, whose inequality and ruggedness showed its antiquity; and finally led into a tolerably large chamber on the lower story of the edifice, to which some old hangings, a lively fire on the hearth, the moonbeams stealing through a latticed window, and the boughs of a myrtle plant which grew around the casement, gave no uncomfortable appearance.

"This," said Berwine, is the resting-place of your attendants," and she pointed to the couches which had been prepared for Rose and Dame Gillian; "we," she added, "proceed farther."

She then took a torch from the attendant maidens, both of whom seemed to shrink back with fear, which was readily caught by Dame Gillian, although she was not probably aware of the cause. But Rose Flammock, unbidden, followed her mistress without hesitation, as Berwine conducted her through a small wicket at the upper end of the apartment, clenched with many an iron nail, into a second but smaller anteroom or wardrobe, at the end of which was a similar door. This wardrobe had also its casements mantled with evergreens, and, like the former, it was faintly enlightened by the moonbeam.

Berwine paused here, and, pointing to Rose, demanded of Eveline, "Why does *she* follow?"

"To share my mistress's danger, be it what it may," answered Rose, with her characteristic readiness of speech and resolution. "Speak," she said, "my dearest lady," grasping Eveline's hand, while she addressed her; "you will not drive your Rose from you? If I am less high-minded than one of your boasted race, I am bold and quick-witted in all honest service. You tremble like the aspen! Do not go into this apartment; do not be gulled by all this pomp and mystery of terrible preparation; bid defiance to this antiquated, and, I think, half-pagan, superstition."

"The Lady Eveline must go, minion," replied Berwine, sternly; "and she must go without any malapert adviser or companion."

"Must go—*must* go!" repeated Rose. "Is this language to a free and noble maiden? Sweet lady, give me once but the least hint that you wish it, and their '*must* go' shall be put to the trial. I will call from the casement on the Norman cavaliers, and tell them we have fallen into a den of witches instead of a house of hospitality."

"Silence, madwoman!" said Berwine, her voice quivering with anger and fear; "you know not who dwells in the next chamber!"

"I will call those who will soon see to that," said Rose, flying to the casement, when Eveline, seizing her arm in her turn, compelled her to stop.

"I thank thy kindness, Rose," she said, "but it cannot help me in this matter. She who enters yonder door must do so alone."

"Then I will enter it in your stead, my dearest lady," said Rose. "You are pale—you are cold—you will die of terror if you go on. There may be as much of trick as of supernatural agency in this matter: me they shall not deceive, or, if some stern spirit craves a victim, better Rose than her lady."

"Forbear—forbear," said Eveline, rousing up her own spirit; "you make me ashamed of myself. This is an ancient ordeal, which regards the females descended from the house of Baldringham as far as in the third degree, and them only. I did not indeed expect, in my present circumstances, to have been called upon to undergo it; but, since the hour summons me, I will meet it as freely as any of my ancestors."

So saying, she took the torch from the hand of Berwine, and wishing good-night to her and Rose, gently disengaged herself from the hold of the latter, and advanced into the mysterious chamber. Rose pressed after her so far as to see that it was an apartment of moderate dimensions, resembling that through which they had last passed, and lighted by the moonbeams, which came through a window lying on the same range with those of the anterooms. More she could not see, for Eveline turned on the threshold, and, kissing her at the same time, thrust her gently back into the smaller apartment which she had just left, shut the door of communication, and barred and bolted it, as if in security against her well-meant intrusion.

Berwine now exhorted Rose, as she valued her life, to retire into the first ante-room, where the beds were prepared, and betake herself, if not to rest, at least to silence and devotion; but the faithful Flemish girl stoutly refused her entreaties and resisted her commands.

"Talk not to me of danger," she said; "here I remain, that I may be at least within hearing of my mistress's danger; and woe betide those who shall offer her injury! Take notice, that twenty Norman spears surround this inhospitable dwelling, prompt to avenge whatsoever injury shall be offered to the daughter of Raymond Berenger."

"Reserve your threats for those who are mortal," said Berwine, in a low but piercing whisper; "the owner of yonder chamber fears them not. Farewell—thy danger be on thine own head!"

She departed, leaving Rose strangely agitated by what had passed, and somewhat appalled at her last words. "These Saxons," said the maiden, within herself, "are but half converted after all, and hold many of their old hellish rites in the worship of elementary spirits. Their very saints are unlike to the saints of any Christian country, and have, as it were, a look of something savage and fiendish; their very names sound pagan and diabolical. It is fearful being alone here; and all is silent as death in the apartment into which my lady has been thus strangely compelled. Shall I call up Gillian? But no; she has neither sense, nor courage, nor principle, to aid me on such an occasion: better alone than have a false friend for company. I will see if the Normans are on their post, since it is to them I must trust if a moment of need should arrive."

Thus reflecting, Rose Flammock went to the window of the little apartment, in order to satisfy herself of the vigilance of the sentinels, and to ascertain the exact situation of the *corps de garde*. The moon was at full, and enabled her to see with accuracy the nature of the ground without. In the first place, she was rather disappointed to find that, instead of being so near the earth as she supposed, the range of windows, which gave light as well to the two ante-rooms as to the mysterious chamber itself, looked down upon an ancient moat, by which they were divided from the level ground on the farther side. The defense which this fosse afforded seemed to have been long neglected, and the bottom, entirely dry, was choked in many places with bushes and low trees, which rose up against the wall of the castle, and by means of which it seemed to Rose the windows might be

easily scaled and the mansion entered. From the level plain beyond, the space adjoining to the castle was in a considerable degree clear, and the moonbeams slumbered on its close and beautiful turf, mixed with long shadows of the towers and trees. Beyond this esplanade lay the forest ground, with a few gigantic oaks scattered individually along the skirt of its dark and ample domain, like champions who take their ground of defiance in front of a line of arrayed battle.

The calm beauty and repose of a scene so lovely, the stillness of all around, and the more matured reflections which the whole suggested, quieted, in some measure, the apprehensions which the events of the evening had inspired. "After all," she reflected, "why should I be so anxious on account of the Lady Eveline? There is among the proud Normans and the dogged Saxons scarce a single family of note but must needs be held distinguished from others by some superstitious observance peculiar to their race, as if they thought it scorn to go to Heaven like a poor simple Fleming such as I am. Could I but see a Norman sentinel, I would hold myself satisfied of my mistress's security. And yonder one stalks along the gloom, wrapt in his long white mantle, and the moon tipping the point of his lance with silver. What ho, sir cavalier!"

The Norman turned his steps, and approached the ditch as she spoke. "What is your pleasure, damsel?" he demanded.

"The window next to mine is that of the Lady Eveline Berenger, whom you are appointed to guard. Please to give heedful watch upon this side of the castle."

"Doubt it not, lady," answered the cavalier; and, enveloping himself in his long *chappe*, or military watch-cloak, he withdrew to a large oak-tree at some distance, and stood there with folded arms, and leaning on his lance, more like a trophy of armor than a living warrior.

Embolded by the consciousness that in case of need succor was close at hand, Rose drew back into her little chamber, and having ascertained, by listening, that there was no noise or stirring in that of Eveline, she began to make some preparations for her own repose. For this purpose she went into the outward ante-room, where Dame Gillian, whose fears had given way to the soporiferous effects of a copious draught of *lithe-alos* (mild ale, of the first strength and quality), slept as sound a sleep as that generous Saxon beverage could procure.

Muttering an indignant censure on her sloth and indiffer-

ence, Rose caught, from the empty couch which had been destined for her own use, the upper covering, and dragging it with her into the inner ante-room, disposed it so as, with the assistance of the rushes which strewed that apartment, to form a sort of couch, upon which, half seated, half reclined, she resolved to pass the night in as close attendance upon her mistress as circumstances permitted.

Thus seated, her eye on the pale planet which sailed in full glory through the blue sky of midnight, she proposed to herself that sleep should not visit her eyelids till the dawn of morning should assure her of Eveline's safety.

Her thoughts, meanwhile, rested on the boundless and shadowy world beyond the grave, and on the great, and perhaps yet undecided, question, whether the separation of its inhabitants from those of this temporal sphere is absolute and decided, or whether, influenced by motives which we cannot appreciate, they continue to hold shadowy communication with those yet existing in earthly reality of flesh and blood? To have denied this would, in the age of crusades and of miracles, have incurred the guilt of heresy; but Rose's firm good sense led her to doubt at least the frequency of supernatural interference, and she comforted herself with an opinion, contradicted, however, by her own involuntary starts and shudderings at every leaf which moved, that, in submitting to the performance of the rite imposed on her, Eveline incurred no real danger, and only sacrificed to an obsolete family superstition.

As this conviction strengthened on Rose's mind, her purpose of vigilance began to decline; her thoughts wandered to objects towards which they were not directed, like sheep which stray beyond the charge of their shepherd; her eyes no longer brought back to her a distinct apprehension of the broad, round, silvery orb on which they continued to gaze. At length they closed, and seated on the folded mantle, her back resting against the wall of the apartment, and her white arms folded on her bosom, Rose Flammock fell fast asleep.

Her repose was fearfully broken by a shrill and piercing shriek from the apartment where her lady reposed. To start up and fly to the door was the work of a moment for the generous girl, who never permitted fear to struggle with love or duty. The door was secured with both bar and bolt; and another fainter scream, or rather groan, seemed to say, aid must be instant, or in vain. Rose next rushed to the window, and screamed rather than called to the Norman

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soldier, who, distinguished by the white folds of his watch-cloak, still retained his position under the old oak-tree.

At the cry of "Help–help ! the Lady Eveline is murdered !" the seeming statue, starting at once into active exertion, sped with the swiftness of a race-horse to the brink of the moat, and was about to cross it, opposite to the spot where Rose stood at the open casement, urging him to speed by voice and gesture.

"Not here—not here !" she exclaimed with breathless precipitation, as she saw him make towards her—"the window to the right—scale it, for God's sake, and undo the door of communication."

The soldier seemed to comprehend her ; he dashed into the moat without hesitation, securing himself by catching at the boughs of trees as he descended. In one moment he vanished among the underwood ; and in another, availing himself of the branches of a dwarf oak, Rose saw him upon her right, and close to the window of the fatal apartment. One fear remained—the casement might be secured against entrance from without ; but no ! at the thrust of the Norman it yielded, and, its clasps or fastenings being worn with time, fell inward with a crash which even Dame Gillian's slumbers were unable to resist.

Echoing scream upon scream, in the usual fashion of fools and cowards, she entered the cabinet from the ante-room, just as the door of Eveline's chamber opened, and the soldier appeared, bearing in his arms the half-undressed and lifeless form of the Norman maiden herself. Without speaking a word, he placed her in Rose's arms, and, with the same precipitation with which he had entered, threw himself out of the opened window from which Rose had summoned him.

Gillian, half distracted with fear and wonder, heaped exclamations on questions, and mingled questions with cries for help, till Rose sternly rebuked her in a tone which seemed to recall her scattered senses. She became then composed enough to fetch a lamp which remained lighted in the room she had left, and to render herself at least partly useful in suggesting and applying the usual modes for recalling the suspended sense. In this they at length succeeded, for Eveline fetched a fuller sigh, and opened her eyes ; but presently shut them again, and letting her head drop on Rose's bosom, fell into a strong shuddering fit ; while her faithful damsel, chafing her hands and her temples alternately with affectionate assiduity, and mingling caresses with these efforts,

exclaimed aloud, "She lives! She is recovering. Praised be God!"

"Praised be God!" was echoed in a solemn tone from the window of the apartment; and turning towards it in terror, Rose beheld the armed and plumed head of the soldier who had come so opportunely to their assistance, and who, supported by his arm, had raised himself so high as to be able to look into the interior of the cabinet.

Rose immediately ran towards him. "Go—go, good friend," she said; "the lady recovers—your reward shall await you another time. Go—begone! Yet stay—keep on your post, and I will call you if there is farther need. Begone—be faithful and be secret."

The soldier obeyed without answering a word, and she presently saw him descend into the moat. Rose then returned back to her mistress, whom she found supported by Gillian, moaning feebly, and muttering hurried and unintelligible ejaculations, all intimating that she labored under a violent shock sustained from some alarming cause.

Dame Gillian had no sooner recovered some degree of self-possession than her curiosity became active in proportion. "What means all this?" she said to Rose—"what has been doing among you?"

"I do not know," replied Rose.

"If you do not," said Gillian, "who should? Shall I call the other women and raise the house?"

"Not for your life," said Rose, "till my lady is able to give her own orders; and for this apartment, so help me Heaven, as I will do my best to discover the secrets it contains! Support my mistress the whilst."

So saying, she took the lamp in her hand, and, crossing her brow, stepped boldly across the mysterious threshold, and, holding up the light, surveyed the apartment.

It was merely an old vaulted chamber of very moderate dimensions. In one corner was an image of the Virgin, rudely cut, and placed above a Saxon font of curious workmanship. There were two seats, and a couch covered with coarse tapestry, on which it seemed that Eveline had been reposing. The fragments of the shattered casement lay on the floor; but that opening had been only made when the soldier forced it in, and she saw no other access by which a stranger could have entered an apartment the ordinary access to which was barred and bolted.

Rose felt the influence of those terrors which she had hitherto surmounted; she cast her mantle hastily around her

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head, as if to shroud her sight from some blighting vision, and tripping back to the cabinet with more speed and a less firm step than when she left it, she directed Gillian to lend her assistance in conveying Eveline to the next room; and having done so, carefully secured the door of communication, as if to put a barrier betwixt them and the suspected danger.

The Lady Eveline was now so far recovered that she could sit up, and was trying to speak, though but faintly. "Rose," she said at length, "I have seen her—my doom is sealed."

Rose immediately recollected the imprudence of suffering Gillian to hear what her mistress might say at such an awful moment, and hastily adopting the proposal she had before declined, desired her to go and call other two maidens of their mistress's household.

"And where am I to find them in this house," said Dame Gillian, "where strange men run about one chamber at midnight, and devils, for aught I know, frequent the rest of the habitation?"

"Find them where you can," said Rose, sharply; "but begone presently."

Gillian withdrew lingeringly, and muttering at the same time something which could not distinctly be understood. No sooner was she gone than Rose, giving way to the enthusiastic affection which she felt for her mistress, implored her, in the most tender terms, to "Open her eyes (for she had again closed them), and speak to Rose, her own Rose, who was ready, if necessary, to die by her mistress's side."

"To-morrow—to-morrow, Rose," murmured Eveline, "I cannot speak at present."

"Only disburden your mind with one word: tell what has thus alarmed you—what danger you apprehend."

"I have seen her," answered Eveline—"I have seen the tenant of yonder chamber—the vision fatal to my race! Urge me no more; to-morrow you shall know all." *

As Gillian entered with two of the maidens of her mistress's household, they removed the Lady Eveline, by Rose's directions, into a chamber at some distance, which the latter had occupied, and placed her in one of their beds, where Rose, dismissing the others (Gillian excepted) to seek repose where they could find it, continued to watch her mistress. For some time she continued very much disturbed, but,

* See Bahr-geist. Note 10.

gradually, fatigue, and the influence of some narcotic which Gillian had sense enough to recommend and prepare, seemed to compose her spirits. She fell into a deep slumber, from which she did not awaken until the sun was high over the distant hills.

CHAPTER XV

I see a hand you cannot see,
Which beckons me away;
I hear a voice you cannot hear,
Which says I must not stay.
MALLET.

WHEN Eveline first opened her eyes, it seemed to be without any recollection of what had passed on the night preceding. She looked round the apartment, which was coarsely and scantily furnished, as one destined for the use of domestics and menials, and said to Rose, with a smile, "Our good kinswoman maintains the ancient Saxon hospitality at a homely rate, so far as lodging is concerned. I could have willingly parted with last night's profuse supper, to have obtained a bed of a softer texture. Methinks my limbs feel as if I had been under all the flails of a franklin's barnyard."

"I am glad to see you so pleasant, madam," answered Rose, discreetly avoiding any reference to the events of the night before.

Dame Gillian was not so scrupulous. "Your ladyship last night lay down on a better bed than this," she said, "unless I am much mistaken; and Rose Flammock and yourself know best why you left it."

If a look could have killed, Dame Gillian would have been in deadly peril from that which Rose shot at her, by way of rebuke for this ill-advised communication. It had instantly the effect which was to be apprehended, for Lady Eveline seemed at first surprised and confused, then, as recollections of the past arranged themselves in her memory, she folded her hands, looked on the ground, and wept bitterly, with much agitation.

Rose entreated her to be comforted, and offered to fetch the old Saxon chaplain of the house to administer spiritual consolation, if her grief rejected temporal comfort.

"No, call him not," said Eveline, raising her head and drying her eyes: "I have had enough of Saxon kindness. What a fool was I to expect, in that hard and unfeeling woman, any commiseration for my youth—my late suffer-

ings—my orphan condition! I will not permit her a poor triumph over the Norman blood of Berenger, by letting her see how much I have suffered under her inhuman infliction. But first, Rose, answer me truly, was any intimate of Baldringham witness to my distress last night?"

Rose assured her that she had been tended exclusively by her own retinue, herself and Gillian, Blanche and Ternotte.

She seemed to receive satisfaction from this assurance. "Hear me, both of you," she said, "and observe my words, as you love and as you fear me. Let no syllable be breathed from your lips of what has happened this night. Carry the same charge to my maidens. Lend me thine instant aid, Gillian, and thine, my dearest Rose, to change these disordered garments and arrange this disheveled hair. It was a poor vengeance she sought, and all because of my country. I am resolved she shall not see the slightest trace of the sufferings she has inflicted."

As she spoke thus, her eyes flashed with indignation, which seemed to dry up the tears that had before filled them. Rose saw the change of her manner with a mixture of pleasure and concern, being aware that her mistress's predominant failing was incident to her, as a spoiled child, who, accustomed to be treated with kindness, deference, and indulgence by all around her, was apt to resent warmly whatever resembled neglect or contradiction.

"God knows," said the faithful bower-maiden, "I would hold my hand out to catch drops of molton lead, rather than endure your tears; and yet, my sweet mistress, I would rather at present see you grieved than angry. This ancient lady hath, it would seem, but acted according to some old superstitious rite of her family, which is in part yours. Her name is respectable, both from her conduct and possessions; and, hard-pressed as you are by the Normans, with whom your kinswoman, the prioress, is sure to take part, I was in hope you might have had some shelter and countenance from the Lady of Baldringham."

"Never, Rose—never," answered Eveline; "you know not—you cannot guess what she has made me suffer, exposing me to witchcraft and fiends. Thyself said it, and said it truly—the Saxons are still half pagans, void of Christianity, as of nature and kindliness."

"Ay, but," replied Rose, "I spoke then to dissuade you from a danger; now that the danger is passed and over, I may judge of it otherwise."

"Speak not for them, Rose," replied Eveline, angrily;

"no innocent victim was ever offered up at the altar of a fiend with more indifference than my father's kinswoman delivered up me—me an orphan, bereaved of my natural and powerful support. I hate her cruelty—I hate her house—I hate the thought of all that has happened here—of all, Rose, except thy matchless faith and fearless attachment. Go, bid our train saddle directly; I will be gone instantly. I will not attire myself," she added, rejecting the assistance she had at first required—"I will have no ceremony—tarry for no leave-taking."

In the hurried and agitated manner of her mistress, Rose recognized with anxiety another mood of the same irritable and excited temperament which had before discharged itself in tears and fits. But perceiving, at the same time, that remonstrance was in vain, she gave the necessary orders for collecting their company, saddling, and preparing for departure; hoping that, as her mistress removed to a farther distance from the scene where her mind had received so severe a shock, her equanimity might, by degrees, he restored.

Dame Gillian, accordingly, was busied with arranging the packages of her lady, and all the rest of Lady Eveline's retinue in preparing for instant departure, when, preceded by her steward, who acted also as a sort of gentleman-usher, leaning upon her confidential Berwine, and followed by two or three more of the most distinguished of her household, with looks of displeasure on her ancient yet lofty brow, the Lady Ermengarde entered the appartment.

Eveline, with a trembling and hurried hand, a burning cheek, and other signs of agitation, was herself busied about the arrangement of some baggage, when her relation made her appearance. At once, to Rose's great surprise, she exerted a strong command over herself, and, repressing every external appearance of disorder, she advanced to meet her relation, with a calm and haughty stateliness equal to her own.

"I come to give you good-morning, our niece," said Ermengarde, haughtily indeed, yet with more deference than she seemed at first to have intended, so much did the bearing of Eveline impose respect upon her. "I find that you have been pleased to shift that chamber which was assigned you, in conformity with the ancient custom of this household, and betake yourself to the apartment of a menial."

"Are you surprised at that, lady?" demanded Eveline in

her turn; "or are you disappointed that you find me not a corpse, within the limits of the chamber which your hospitality and affection allotted to me?"

"Your sleep, then, has been broken?" said Ermengarde, looking fixedly at the Lady Eveline as she spoke.

"If I complain not, madam, the evil must be deemed of little consequence. What has happened is over and past, and it is not my intention to trouble you with the recital."

"She of the ruddy finger," replied Ermengarde, triumphantly, "loves not the blood of the stranger."

"She had less reason, while she walked the earth, to love that of the Saxon," said Eveline, "unless her legend speaks false in that matter; and unless, as I well suspect, your house is haunted, not by the soul of the dead who suffered within its walls, but by evil spirits, such as the descendants of Hengist and Horsa are said still in secret to worship."

"You are pleasant, maiden," replied the old lady, scornfully, "or, if your words are meant in earnest, the shaft of your censure has glanced aside. A house blessed by the holy St. Dunstan and by the royal and holy Confessor is no abode for evil spirits."

"The house of Baldringham," replied Eveline, "is no abode for those who fear such spirits; and as I will, with all humility, avow myself of the number, I shall presently leave it to the custody of St. Dunstan."

"Not till you have broken your fast, I trust?" said the Lady of Baldringham; "you will not, I hope, do my years and our relationship such foul disgrace?"

"Pardon me, madam," replied the Lady Eveline; "those who have experienced your hospitality at night have little occasion for breakfast in the morning. Rose, are not those loitering knaves assembled in the courtyard, or are they yet on their couches, making up for the slumber they have lost by midnight disturbances?"

Rose announced that her train was in the court, and mounted; when, with a low reverence, Eveline endeavored to pass her relation, and leave the apartment without farther ceremony. Ermengarde at first confronted her with a grim and furious glance, which seemed to show a soul fraught with more rage than the thin blood and rigid features of extreme old age had the power of expressing, and raised her ebony staff as if about even to proceed to some act of personal violence. But she changed her purpose, and suddenly made way for Eveline, who passed without further parley; and as she descended the staircase

which conducted from the apartment to the gateway, she heard the voice of her aunt behind her, like that of an aged and offended sibyl, denouncing wrath and woe upon her insolence and presumption.

"Pride," she exclaimed, "goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. She who scorneth the house of her forefathers, a stone from its battlements shall crush her! She who mocks the gray hairs of a parent, never shall one of her own locks be silvered with age! She who weds with a man of war and of blood, her end shall neither be peaceful nor bloodless!"

Hurrying to escape from these and other ominous denunciations, Eveline rushed from the house, mounted her palfrey with the precipitation of a fugitive, and, surrounded by her attendants, who had caught a part of her alarm, though without conjecturing the cause, rode hastily into the forest; old Raoul, who was well acquainted with the country, acting as their guide.

Agitated more than she was willing to confess to herself, by thus leaving the habitation of so near a relation, loaded with maledictions instead of the blessings which are usually bestowed on a parting kinswoman, Eveline hastened forward, until the huge oak trees with intervening arms had hidden from her view the fatal mansion.

The trampling and galloping of horse was soon after heard, announcing the approach of the patrol left by the Constable for the protection of the mansion, and who now, collecting from their different stations, came prepared to attend the Lady Eveline on her farther road to Gloucester, great part of which lay through the extensive forest of Dean, then a silvan region of large extent, though now much denuded of trees for the service of the iron mines. The cavaliers came up to join the retinue of Lady Eveline, with armor glittering in the morning rays, trumpets sounding, horses prancing, neighing, and thrown, each by his chivalrous rider, into the attitude best qualified to exhibit the beauty of the steed and dexterity of the horseman; while their lances, streaming with long penoncelles, were brandished in every manner which could display elation of heart and readiness of hand. The sense of the military character of her countrymen of Normandy gave to Eveline a feeling at once of security and triumph, which operated towards the dispelling of her gloomy thoughts, and of the feverish disorder which affected her nerves. The rising sun also, the song of the birds among the bowers, the lowing of

the cattle as they were driven to pasture, the sight of the hind, who, with her fawn trotting by her side, often crossed some forest glade within view of the travelers—all contributed to dispel the terror of Eveline's nocturnal visions, and soothe to rest the more angry passions which had agitated her bosom at her departure from Baldringham. She suffered her palfrey to slacken his pace, and, with female attention to propriety, began to adjust her riding-robes and compose her head-dress, disordered in her hasty departure. Rose saw her cheek assume a paler but more settled hue, instead of the angry hectic which had colored it, saw her eye become more steady as she looked with a sort of triumph upon her military attendants, and pardoned, what on other occasions she would probably have made some reply to, her enthusiastic exclamations in praise of her countrymen.

"We journey safe," said Eveline, "under the care of the princely and victorious Normans. Theirs is the noble wrath of the lion, which destroys or is appeased at once; there is no guile in their romantic affection, no sullenness mixed with their generous indignation; they know the duties of the hall as well as those of battle; and were they to be surpassed in the arts of war, which will only be when Plinlimmon is removed from its base, they would still remain superior to every other people in generosity and courtesy."

"If I do not feel all their merits so strongly as if I shared their blood," said Rose, "I am at least glad to see them around us, in woods which are said to abound with dangers of various kinds. And I confess my heart is the lighter that I can now no longer observe the least vestige of that ancient mansion, in which we passed so unpleasant a night, and the recollection of which will always be odious to me."

Eveline looked sharply at her. "Confess the truth, Rose; thou wouldst give thy best kirtle to know all of my horrible adventure."

"It is but confessing that I am a woman," answered Rose; "and did I say a man, I daresay the difference of sex would imply but a small abatement of curiosity."

"Thou makest no parade of other feelings which prompt thee to inquire into my fortunes," said Eveline; "but, sweet Rose, I give thee not the less credit for them. Believe me, thou shalt know all—but, I think, not now."

"At your pleasure," said Rose; "and yet, methinks, the bearing in your solitary bosom such a fearful secret will only render the weight more intolerable. On my silence you may rely as on that of the Holy Image, which hears us confess

what it never reveals. Besides such things become familiar to the imagination when they have been spoken of, and that which is familiar gradually becomes stripped of its terrors."

"Thou speakest with reason, my prudent Rose; and surely in this gallant troop, borne like a flower on a bush by my good palfrey Yseulte, fresh gales blowing round us, flowers opening and birds singing, and having thee by my bridle-rein, I ought to feel this a fitting time to communicate what thou hast so good a title to know. And—yes! thou shalt know all! Thou art not, I presume, ignorant of the qualities of what the Saxons of this land call a *bahr-geist?*"

"Pardon me, lady," answered Rose, "my father discouraged my listening to such discourses. I might see evil spirits enough, he said, without my imagination being taught to form such as were fantastical. The word 'bahr-geist' I have heard used by Gillian and other Saxons; but to me it only conveys some idea of indefinite terror, of which I have never asked nor received an explanation."

"Know then," said Eveline, "it is a specter, usually the image of a departed person, who, either for wrong sustained in some particular place during life, or through treasure hidden there, or from some such other cause, haunts the spot from time to time, becomes familiar to those who dwell there, takes an interest in their fate, occasionally for good, in other instances or times for evil. The bahr-geist is, therefore, sometimes regarded as the good genius, sometimes as the avenging fiend, attached to particular families and classes of men. It is the lot of the family of Baldringham—of no mean note in other respects—to be subject to the visits of such a being."

"May I ask the cause, if it be known, of such visitation?" said Rose, desirous to avail herself to the uttermost of the communicative mood of her young lady, which might not perhaps last very long.

"I know the legend but imperfectly," replied Eveline, proceeding with a degree of calmness, the result of strong exertion over her mental anxiety, "but in general it runs thus:—Baldrick, the Saxon hero who first possessed yonder dwelling, became enamored of a fair Briton, said to have been descended from those Druids of whom the Welsh speak so much, and deemed not unacquainted with the arts of sorcery which they practised, when they offered up human sacrifices amid those circles of unhewn and living rock, of which thou hast seen so many. After more than two years' wedlock, Baldrick became weary of his wife to such a point, that

he formed the cruel resolution of putting her to death. Some say he doubted her fidelity ; some that the matter was pressed on him by the church, as she was suspected of heresy ; some that he removed her to make way for a more wealthy marriage ; but all agree in the result. He sent two of his cnichts to the house of Baldringham, to put to death the unfortunate Vanda, and commanded them to bring him the ring which had circled her finger on the day of wedlock, in token that his orders were accomplished. The men were ruthless in their office : they strangled Vanda in yonder apartment, and as the hand was so swollen that no effort could draw off the ring, they obtained possession of it by severing the finger. But long before the return of those cruel perpetrators of her death, the shadow of Vanda had appeared before her appalled husband, and holding up to him her bloody hand, made him fearfully sensible how well his savage commands had been obeyed. After haunting him in peace and war, in desert, court, and camp, until he died despairingly on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, the bahr-geist, or ghost, of the murdered Vanda became so terrible in the house of Baldringham that the succor of St. Dunstan was itself scarcely sufficient to put bounds to her visitation. Yea, the blessed saint, when he had succeeded in his exorcism, did, in requital of Baldrick's crime, impose a strong and enduring penalty upon every female descendant of the house in the third degree ; namely, that once in their lives, and before their twenty-first year, they should each spend a solitary night in the chamber of the murdered Vanda, saying therein certain prayers, as well for her repose as for the suffering soul of her murderer. During that awful space, it is generally believed that the spirit of the murdered person appears to the female who observes the vigil, and shows some sign of her future good or bad fortune. If favorable, she appears with a smiling aspect, and crosses them with her unbloodied hand ; but she announces evil fortune by showing the hand from which the finger was severed, with a stern countenance, as if resenting upon the descendant of her husband his inhuman cruelty. Sometimes she is said to speak. These particulars I learned long since from an old Saxon dame, the mother of our Margery, who had been an attendant on my grandmother, and left the house of Baldringham when she made her escape from it with my father's father."

"Did your grandmother ever render this homage," said Rose, "which seems to me—under favor of St. Dunstan—to

bring humanity into too close intercourse with a being of a doubtful nature?"

"My grandfather thought so, and never permitted my grandmother to revisit the house of Baldringham after her marriage; hence disunion betwixt him and his son on the one part and the members of that family on the other. They laid sundry misfortunes, and particularly the loss of male heirs which at that time befell them, to my parent's not having done the hereditary homage to the bloody-fingered bahr-geist."

"And how could you, my dearest lady," said Rose, "knowing that they held among them a usage so hideous, think of accepting the invitation of Lady Ermengarde?"

"I can hardly answer you the question," replied Eveline. "Partly I feared my father's recent calamity, to be slain, as I have heard him say his aunt once prophesied of him, by the enemy he most despised, might be the result of this rite having been neglected; and partly I hoped that, if my mind should be appalled at the danger, when it presented itself closer to my eye, it could not be urged on me in courtesy and humanity. You saw how soon my cruel-hearted relative pounced upon the opportunity, and how impossible it became for me, bearing the name, and, I trust, the spirit, of Berenger, to escape from the net in which I had involved myself."

"No regard for name or rank should have engaged me," replied Rose, "to place myself where apprehension alone, even without the terrors of a real visitation, might have punished my presumption with insanity. But what, in the name of Heaven, did you see at this horrible rendezvous?"

"Ay, there is the question," said Eveline, raising her hand to her brow—"how I could witness that which I distinctly saw, yet be able to retain command of thought and intellect! I had recited the prescribed devotions for the murderer and his victim, and sitting down on the couch which was assigned me, had laid aside such of my clothes as might impede my rest—I had surmounted, in short, the first shock which I experienced in committing myself to this mysterious chamber, and I hoped to pass the night in slumber as sound as my thoughts were innocent. But I was fearfully disappointed. I cannot judge how long I had slept, when my bosom was oppressed by an unusual weight, which seemed at once to stifle my voice, stop the beating of my heart, and prevent me from drawing my breath; and when I looked up to discover the cause of this horrible suf-

focation, the form of the murdered British matron stood over my couch, taller than life, shadowy, and with a countenance where traits of dignity and beauty were mingled with a fierce expression of vengeful exultation. She held over me the hand which bore the bloody marks of her husband's cruelty, and seemed as if she signed the cross, devoting me to destruction; while, with an unearthly tone, she uttered these words—

> "Widow'd wife and wedded maid,
> Betrothed, betrayer, and betray'd!"

The phantom stooped over me as she spoke, and lowered her gory fingers, as if to touch my face, when, terror giving me the power of which at first it had deprived me, I screamed aloud—the casement of the apartment was thrown open with a loud noise—and—— But what signifies my telling all this to thee, Rose, who show so plainly, by the movement of eye and lip, that you consider me as a silly and childish dreamer?"

"Be not angry, my dear lady," said Rose; "I do indeed believe that the witch we call Mara has been dealing with you; but she, you know, is by leeches considered no real phantom, but solely the creation of our own imagination, disordered by causes which arise from bodily indisposition."

"Thou art learned, maiden," said Eveline, rather peevishly; "but when I assure thee that my better angel came to my assistance in a human form, that at his appearance the fiend vanished, and that he transported me in his arms out of the chamber of terror, I think thou wilt, as a good Christian, put more faith in that which I tell you."

"Indeed—indeed, my sweetest mistress, I cannot," replied Rose. "It is even that circumstance of the guardian angel which makes me consider the whole as a dream. A Norman sentinel, whom I myself called from his post on purpose, did indeed come to your assistance, and, breaking into your apartment, transported you to that where I myself received you from his arms in a lifeless condition."

"A Norman soldier, ha!" said Eveline, coloring extremely; "and to whom, maiden, did you dare give commission to break into my sleeping-chamber?"

"Your eyes flash anger, madam, but is it reasonable they should? Did I not hear your screams of agony, and was I to stand fettered by ceremony at such a moment?—no more than if the castle had been on fire."

"I ask you again, Rose," said her mistress, still with discomposure, though less angrily than at first, "whom you directed to break into my apartment?"

"Indeed, I know not, lady," said Rose; "for, besides that he was muffled in his mantle, little chance was there of my knowing his features, even had I seen them fully. But I can soon discover the cavalier; and I will set about it, that I may give him the reward I promised, and warn him him to be silent and discreet in this matter."

"Do so," said Eveline; "and if you find him among those soldiers who attend us, I will indeed lean to thine opinion, and think that fantasy had the chief share in the evils I have endured the last night."

Rose struck her palfrey with the rod, and accompanied by her mistress, rode up to Philip Guarine, the Constable's squire, who for the present commanded their little escort. "Good Guarine," she said, "I had talk with one of these sentinels last night from my window, and he did me some service, for which I promised him recompense. Will you inquire for the man, that I may pay him his guerdon?"

"Truly, I will owe him a guerdon also, pretty maiden," answered the squire; "for if a lance of them approached near enough the house to hold speech from the windows, he transgressed the precise orders of his watch."

"Tush! you must forgive that for my sake," said Rose. "I warrant, had I called on yourself, stout Guarine, I should have had influence to bring you under my chamber window."

Guarine laughed, and shrugged his shoulders. "True it is," he said, "when women are in place, discipline is in danger."

He then went to make the necessary inquiries among his band, and returned with the assurance that his soldiers, generally and severally, denied having approached the mansion of the Lady Ermengarde on the preceding night.

"Thou seest, Rose," said Eveline, with a significant look to her attendant.

"The poor rogues are afraid of Guarine's severity," said Rose, "and dare not tell the truth; I shall have some one in private claiming the reward of me."

"I would I had the privilege myself, damsel," said Guarine; "but for these fellows, they are not so timorous as you suppose them, being even too ready to avouch their roguery when it hath less excuse. Besides, I promised them impunity. Have you anything farther to order?"

"Nothing, good Guarine," said Eveline; "only this small donative to procure wine for thy soldiers, that they may spend the next night more merrily than the last. And now he is gone. Maiden, thou must, I think, be now well aware that what thou sawest was no earthly being?"

"I must believe mine own ears and eyes, madam," replied Rose.

"Do—but allow me the same privilege," answered Eveline. "Believe me that my deliverer, for so I must call him, bore the features of one who neither was, nor could be, in the neighborhood of Baldringham. Tell me but one thing. What dost thou think of this extraordinary prediction—

> 'Widow'd wife and wedded maid,
> Betrothed, betrayer, and betrayed'?

Thou wilt say it is an idle invention of my brain; but think it for a moment the speech of a true diviner, and what wouldst thou say of it?"

"That you may be betrayed, my dearest lady, but never can be a betrayer," answered Rose, with animation.

Eveline reached her hand out to her friend, and as she pressed affectionately that which Rose gave in return, she whispered to her with energy, "I thank thee for the judgment, which my own heart confirms."

A cloud of dust now announced the approach of the Constable of Chester and his retinue, augmented by the attendance of his host Sir William [Amelot] Herbert, and some of his neighbors and kinsmen who came to pay their respects to the orphan of the Garde Doloureuse, by which appellation Eveline was known upon her passage through their territory.

Eveline remarked, that at their greeting De Lacy looked with displeased surprise at the disarrangement of her dress and equipage, which her hasty departure from Baldringham had necessarily occasioned; and she was, on her part, struck with an expression of countenance which seemed to say, "I am not to be treated as an ordinary person, who may be received with negligence, and treated slightly with impunity." For the first time, she thought that, though always deficient in grace and beauty, the Constable's countenance was formed to express the more angry passions with force and vivacity, and that she who shared his rank and name must lay her account with the implicit surrender of her will and wishes to those of an arbitrary lord and master.

But the cloud soon passed from the Constable's brow; and in the conversation which he afterwards maintained with Herbert and the other knights and gentlemen, who from time to time came to greet and accompany them for a little way on their journey, Eveline had occasion to admire his superiority, both of sense and expression, and to remark the attention and deference with which his words were listened to by men too high in rank, and too proud, readily to admit any pre-eminence that was not founded on acknowledged merit. The regard of women is generally much influenced by the estimation which an individual maintains in the opinion of men; and Eveline, when she concluded her journey in the Benedictine nunnery in Gloucester, could not think without respect upon the renowned warrior and celebrated politician, whose acknowledged abilities appeared to place him above every one whom she had seen approach him. His wife, Eveline thought (and she was not without ambition), if relinquishing some of those qualities in a husband which are in youth most captivating to the female imagination, must be still generally honored and respected, and have contentment, if not romantic felicity, within her reach.

CHAPTER XVI

The Lady Eveline remained nearly four months with her aunt, the abbess of the Benedictine nunnery, under whose auspices the Constable of Chester saw his suit advance and prosper as it would probably have done under that of the deceased Raymond Berenger, her brother. It is probable, however, that, but for the supposed vision of the Virgin, and the vow of gratitude which that supposed vision had called forth, the natural dislike of so young a person to a match so unequal in years might have effectually opposed his success. Indeed, Eveline, while honoring the Constable's virtues, doing justice to his high character, and admiring his talents, could never altogether divest herself of a secret fear of him, which, while it prevented her from expressing any direct disapprobation of his addresses, caused her sometimes to shudder, she scarce knew why, at the idea of their becoming successful.

The ominous words, "betraying and betrayed," would then occur to her memory; and when her aunt (the period of the deepest mourning being elapsed) had fixed a day for her betrothal, she looked forward to it with a feeling of terror, for which she was unable to account to herself, and which, as well as the particulars of her dream, she concealed even from Father Aldrovand in the hours of confession. It was not aversion to the Constable; it was far less preference to any other suitor; it was one of those instinctive movements and emotions by which nature seems to warn us of approaching danger, though furnishing no information respecting its nature, and suggesting no means of escaping from it.

So strong were these intervals of apprehension, that, if they had been seconded by the remonstrances of Rose Flammock, as formerly, they might perhaps have led to Eveline's even yet forming some resolution unfavorable to the suit of the Constable. But, still more zealous for her lady's honor than even for her happiness, Rose had strictly forborne every effort which could affect Eveline's purpose, when she had once expressed her approbation of De Lacy's addresses; and

whatever she thought or anticipated concerning the proposed marriage, she seemed from that moment to consider it as an event which must necessarily take place.

De Lacy himself, as he learned more intimately to know the merit of the prize which he was desirous of possessing, looked forward with different feelings towards the union than those with which he had first proposed the measure to Raymond Berenger. It was then a mere match of interest and convenience, which had occurred to the mind of a proud and politic feudal lord, as the best mode of consolidating the power and perpetuating the line of his family. Nor did even the splendor of Eveline's beauty make that impression upon De Lacy which it was calculated to do on the fiery and impassioned chivalry of the age. He was past that period of life when the wise are captivated by outward form, and might have said with truth, as well as with discretion, that he could have wished his beautiful bride several years older, and possessed of a more moderate portion of personal charms, in order to have rendered the match more fitted for his own age and disposition. This stoicism, however, vanished, when, on repeated interviews with his destined bride, he found that she was indeed inexperienced in life, but desirous to be guided by superior wisdom ; and that, although gifted with high spirit, and a disposition which began to recover its natural elastic gaiety, she was gentle, docile, and, above all, endowed with a firmness of principle which seemed to give assurance that she would tread uprightly, and without spot, the slippery paths in which youth, rank, and beauty are doomed to move.

As feelings of a warmer and more impassioned kind towards Eveline began to glow in De Lacy's bosom, his engagements as a crusader became more and more burdensome to him. The benedictine abbess, the natural guardian of Eveline's happiness, added to these feelings by her reasoning and remonstrances. Although a nun and a devotee, she held in reverence the holy state of matrimony, and comprehended so much of it as to be aware that its important purposes could not be accomplished while the whole continent of Europe was interposed betwixt the married pair ; for as to a hint from the Constable, that his young spouse might accompany him into the dangerous and dissolute precincts of the Crusader's camp, the good lady crossed herself with horror at the proposal, and never permitted it to be a second time mentioned in her presence.

It was not, however, uncommon for kings, princes, and

other persons of high consequence, who had taken upon them the vow to rescue Jerusalem, to obtain delays, and even a total remission of their engagement, by proper application to the Church of Rome. The Constable was sure to possess the full advantage of his sovereign's interest and countenance, in seeking permission to remain in England, for he was the noble to whose valor and policy Henry had chiefly entrusted the defense of the disorderly Welsh marches; and it was by no means with his good-will that so useful a subject had ever assumed the cross.

It was settled, therefore, in private betwixt the abbess and the Constable, that the latter should solicit at Rome, and with the Pope's legate in England, a remission of his vow for at least two years—a favor which it was thought could scarce be refused to one of his wealth and influence, backed as it was with the most liberal offers of assistance towards the redemption of the Holy Land. His offers were indeed munificent; for he proposed, if his own personal attendance were dispensed with, to send an hundred lances at his own cost, each lance accompanied by two squires, three archers, and a varlet or horse-boy, being double the retinue by which his own person was to have been accompanied. He offered besides to deposit the sum of two thousand bezants to the general expense of the expedition, to surrender to the use of the Christian armament those equipped vessels which he had provided, and which even now awaited the embarkation of himself and his followers.

Yet, while making these magnificent proffers, the Constable could not help feeling they would be inadequate to the expectations of the rigid prelate Baldwin, who, as he had himself preached the crusade, and brought the Constable and many others into that holy engagement, must needs see with displeasure the work of his eloquence endangered, by the retreat of so important an associate from his favorite enterprise. To soften, therefore, his disappointment as much as possible, the Constable offered to the Archbishop, that, in the event of his obtaining license to remain in Britain, his forces should be led by his nephew, Damian Lacy, already renowned for his early feats of chivalry, the present hope of his house, and, failing heirs of his own body, its future head and support.

The Constable took the most prudent method of communicating this proposal to the Archbishop Baldwin, through a mutual friend, on whose good offices he could depend, and whose interest with the prelate was regarded as great. But,

whatever she thought or anticipated concerning the proposed marriage, she seemed from that moment to consider it as an event which must necessarily take place.

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other persons of high consequence, who had taken upon them the vow to rescue Jerusalem, to obtain delays, and even a total remission of their engagement, by proper application to the Church of Rome. The Constable was sure to possess the full advantage of his sovereign's interest and countenance, in seeking permission to remain in England, for he was the noble to whose valor and policy Henry had chiefly entrusted the defense of the disorderly Welsh marches; and it was by no means with his good-will that so useful a subject had ever assumed the cross.

It was settled, therefore, in private betwixt the abbess and the Constable, that the latter should solicit at Rome, and with the Pope's legate in England, a remission of his vow for at least two years—a favor which it was thought could scarce be refused to one of his wealth and influence, backed as it was with the most liberal offers of assistance towards the redemption of the Holy Land. His offers were indeed munificent; for he proposed, if his own personal attendance were dispensed with, to send an hundred lances at his own cost, each lance accompanied by two squires, three archers, and a varlet or horse-boy, being double the retinue by which his own person was to have been accompanied. He offered besides to deposit the sum of two thousand bezants to the general expense of the expedition, to surrender to the use of the Christian armament those equipped vessels which he had provided, and which even now awaited the embarkation of himself and his followers.

Yet, while making these magnificent proffers, the Constable could not help feeling they would be inadequate to the expectations of the rigid prelate Baldwin, who, as he had himself preached the crusade, and brought the Constable and many others into that holy engagement, must needs see with displeasure the work of his eloquence endangered, by the retreat of so important an associate from his favorite enterprise. To soften, therefore, his disappointment as much as possible, the Constable offered to the Archbishop, that, in the event of his obtaining license to remain in Britain, his forces should be led by his nephew, Damian Lacy, already renowned for his early feats of chivalry, the present hope of his house, and, failing heirs of his own body, its future head and support.

The Constable took the most prudent method of communicating this proposal to the Archbishop Baldwin, through a mutual friend, on whose good offices he could depend, and whose interest with the prelate was regarded as great. But,

notwithstanding the splendor of the proposal, the prelate heard it with sullen and obstinate silence, and referred for answer to a personal conference with the Constable at an appointed day, when concerns of the church would call the Archbishop to the city of Gloucester. The report of the mediator was such as induced the Constable to expect a severe struggle with the proud and powerful churchman ; but, himself proud and powerful, and backed by the favor of his sovereign, he did not expect to be foiled in the contest.

The necessity that this point should be previously adjusted, as well as the recent loss of Eveline's father, gave an air of privacy to De Lacy's courtship, and prevented its being signalized by tournaments and feats of military skill, in which he would have been otherwise desirous to display his address in the eyes of his mistress. The rules of the convent prevented his giving entertainments of dancing, music, or other more pacific revels ; and although the Constable displayed his affection by the most splendid gifts to his future bride and her attendants, the whole affair, in the opinion of the experienced Dame Gillian, proceeded more with the solemnity of a funeral than the light pace of an approaching bridal.

The bride herself felt something of this, and thought occasionally it might have been lightened by the visits of young Damian, in whose age, so nearly corresponding to her own, she might have expected some relief from the formal courtship of his graver uncle. But he came not, and from what the Constable said concerning him, she was led to imagine that the relations had, for a time at least, exchanged occupations and character. The elder De Lacy continued, indeed, in nominal observance of his vow, to dwell in a pavilion by the gates of Gloucester ; but he seldom donned his armor, substituted costly damask and silk for his war-worn shamoy doublet, and affected at his advanced time of life more gaiety of attire than his contemporaries remembered as distinguishing his early youth. His nephew, on the contrary, resided almost constantly on the marches of Wales, occupied in settling by prudence, or subduing by main force, the various disturbances by which these provinces were continually agitated ; and Eveline learned with surprise, that it was with difficulty his uncle had prevailed on him to be present at the ceremony of their being betrothed to each other, or, as the Normans entitled the ceremony, their *fiançailles*. This engagement, which preceded the actual marriage for a space more or less, according to circumstances, was usually

celebrated with a solemnity corresponding to the rank of the contracting parties.

The Constable added, with expressions of regret, that Damian gave himself too little rest, considering his early youth, slept too little, and indulged in too restless a disposition ; that his health was suffering, and that a learned Jewish leech, whose opinion had been taken, had given his advice that the warmth of a more genial climate was necessary to restore his constitution to its general and natural vigor.

Eveline heard this with much regret, for she remembered Damian as the angel of good tidings, who first brought her news of deliverance from the forces of the Welsh ; and the occasions on which they had met, though mournful, brought a sort of pleasure in recollection, so gentle had been the youth's deportment, and so consoling his expressions of sympathy. She wished she could see him, that she might herself judge of the nature of his illness ; for, like other damsels of that age, she was not entirely ignorant of the art of healing, and had been taught by Father Aldrovand, himself no mean physician, how to extract healing essences from plants and herbs gathered under planetary hours. She thought it possible that her talents in this art, slight as they were, might perhaps be of service to one already her friend and liberator, and soon about to become her very near relation.

It was therefore with a sensation of pleasure, mingled with some confusion (at the idea, doubtless, of assuming the part of medical adviser to so young a patient), that one evening, while the convent was assembled about some business of their chapter, she heard Gillian announce that the kinsman of the Lord Constable desired to speak with her. She snatched up the veil which she wore in compliance with the customs of the house, and hastily descended to the parlor, commanding the attendance of Gillian, who, nevertheless, did not think proper to obey the signal.

When she entered the apartment, a man whom she had never seen before advanced, kneeled on one knee, and taking up the hem of her veil, saluted it with an air of the most profound respect. She stepped back, surprised and alarmed, although there was nothing in the appearance of the stranger to justify her apprehension. He seemed to be about thirty years of age, tall of stature, and bearing a noble though wasted form, and a countenance on which disease, or perhaps youthful indulgence, had anticipated the traces of age. His demeanor seemed courteous and respectful, even in a degree which approached to excess. He observed Eveline's

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surprise, and said, in a tone of pride, mingled with emotion, "I fear that I have been mistaken, and that my visit is regarded as an unwelcome instrusion."

"Arise, sir," answered Eveline, "and let me know your name and business. I was summoned to a kinsman of the Constable of Chester."

"And you expected the stripling Damian," answered the stranger. "But the match with which England rings will connect you with others of the house besides that young person; and amongst these with the luckless Randal de Lacy. Perhaps," continued he, "the fair Eveline Berenger may not even have heard his name breathed by his more fortunate kinsman—more fortunate in every respect, but *most* fortunate in his present prospects."

This compliment was accompanied by a deep reverence, and Eveline stood much embarrassed how to reply to his civilities; for although she now well remembered to have heard this Randal slightly mentioned by the Constable when speaking of his family, it was in terms which implied that there was no good understanding betwixt them. She therefore only returned his courtesy by general thanks for the honor of his visit, trusting he would then retire; but such was not his purpose.

"I comprehend," he said, "from the coldness with which the Lady Eveline Berenger receives me, that what she has heard of me from my kinsman—if indeed he thought me worthy of being mentioned to her at all—has been, to say the least, unfavorable. And yet my name once stood as high in fields and courts as that of the Constable; nor is it aught more disgraceful than what is indeed often esteemed the worst of disgraces—poverty, which prevents my still aspiring to places of honor and fame. If my youthful follies have been numerous, I have paid for them by the loss of my fortune and the degradation of my condition; and therein my happy kinsman might, if he pleased, do me some aid. I mean not with his purse or estate; for, poor as I am, I would not live on alms extorted from the reluctant hand of an estranged friend; but his countenance would put him to no cost, and, in so far, I might expect some favor."

"In that my Lord Constable," said Eveline, "must judge for himself. I have—as yet, at least—no right to interfere in his family affairs; and if I should ever have such right, it will well become me to be cautious how I use it."

"It is prudently answered," replied Randal; "but what I ask of you is merely that you, in your gentleness, would

please to convey to my cousin a suit, which I find it hard to bring my ruder tongue to utter with sufficient submission. The usurers, whose claims have eaten like a canker into my means, now menace me with a dungeon—a threat which they dared not mutter, far less attempt to execute, were it not that they see me an outcast, unprotected by the natural head of my family, and regard me rather as they would some unfriended vagrant than as a descendant of the powerful house of Lacy."

"It is a sad necessity," replied Eveline; "but I see not how I can help you in such extremity."

"Easily," replied Randal de Lacy. "The day of your betrothal is fixed, as I hear reported; and it is your right to select what witnesses you please to the solemnity, which may the saints bless! To every one but myself, presence or absence on that occasion is a matter of mere ceremony; to me it is almost life or death. So am I situated, that the marked instance of slight or contempt implied by my exclusion from this meeting of our family will be held for the signal of my final expulsion from the house of the De Lacys, and for a thousand bloodhounds to assail me without mercy or forbearance, whom, cowards as they are, even the slightest show of countenance from my powerful kinsman would compel to stand at bay. But why should I occupy your time in talking thus? Farewell, madam—be happy; and do not think of me the more harshly, that for a few minutes I have broken the tenor of your happy thoughts by forcing my misfortunes on your notice."

"Stay, sir," said Eveline, affected by the tone and manner of the noble suppliant; "you shall not have it to say, that you have told your distress to Eveline Berenger without receiving such aid as is in her power to give. I will mention your request to the Constable of Chester."

"You must do more, if you really mean to assist me," said Randal de Lacy, "you must make that request your own. You do not know," said he, continuing to bend on her a fixed and expressive look, "how hard it is to change the fixed purpose of a De Lacy; a twelvemonth hence you will probably be better acquainted with the firm texture of our resolutions. But, at present, what can withstand your wish should you deign to express it?"

"Your suit, sir, shall not be lost for want of my advancing it with my good word and good wishes," replied Eveline; "but you must be well aware that its success or failure must rest with the Constable himself."

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Randal de Lacy took his leave with the same air of deep reverence which had marked his entrance ; only that, as he then saluted the skirt of Eveline's robe, he now rendered the same homage by touching her hand with his lip. She saw him depart with a mixture of emotions, in which compassion was predominant ; although in his complaints of the Constable's unkindness to him there was something offensive, and his avowal of follies and excess seemed uttered rather in the spirit of wounded pride than in that of contrition.

When Eveline next saw the Constable. she told him of the visit of Randal, and of his request ; and strictly observing his countenance while she spoke, she saw that, at the first mention of his kinsman's name, a gleam of anger shot along his features. He soon subdued it, however, and, fixing his eyes on the ground, listened to Eveline's detailed account of the visit, and her request "that Randal might be one of the invited witnesses to their *fiançailles.*"

The Constable paused for a moment, as if he were considering how to elude the solicitation. At length he replied, "You do not know for whom you ask this, or you would perhaps have forborne your request ; neither are you apprised of its full import, though my crafty cousin well knows that, when I do him this grace which he asks, I bind myself, as it were, in the eye of the world once more—and it will be for the third time—to interfere in his affairs, and place them on such a footing as may afford him the means of re-establishing his fallen consequence, and repairing his numerous errors."

"And wherefore not, my lord ?" said the generous Eveline. "If he has been ruined only through follies, he is now of an age when these are no longer tempting snares ; and if his heart and hand be good, he may yet be an honor to the house of De Lacy."

The Constable shook his head. "He hath indeed," he said, "a heart and hand fit for service, God knoweth, whether in good or evil. But never shall it be said that you, my fair Eveline, made request of Hugo de Lacy which he was not to his uttermost willing to comply with. Randal shall attend at our *fiançailles.* There is indeed the more cause for his attendance, as I somewhat fear we may lack that of our valued nephew Damian, whose malady rather increases than declines, and, as I hear, with strange symptoms of unwonted disturbance of mind and starts of temper, to which the youth hath not hitherto been subject."

CHAPTER XVII

Ring out the merry bells, the bride approaches.
The blush upon her cheek has shamed the morning,
For that is dawning palely. Grant, good saints,
These clouds betoken naught of evil omen!

Old Play.

THE day of the *fiançailles*, or espousals, was now approaching; and it seems that neither the profession of the abbess, nor her practise at least, was so rigid as to prevent her selecting the great parlor of the convent for that holy rite, although necessarily introducing many male guests within those vestal precincts, and notwithstanding that the rite itself was the preliminary to a state which the inmates of the cloister had renounced forever. The abbess's Norman pride of birth, and the real interest which she took in her niece's advancement, overcame all scruples; and the venerable mother might be seen in unwonted bustle, now giving orders to the gardener for decking the apartment with flowers, now to her cellaress, her precentrix, and the lay-sisters of the kitchen, for preparing a splendid banquet, mingling her commands on these worldly subjects with an occasional ejaculation on their vanity and worthlessness, and every now and then converting the busy and anxious looks which she threw upon her preparations into a solemn turning upward of eyes and folding of hands, as one who sighed over the mere earthly pomp which she took such trouble in superintending. At another time the good lady might have been seen in close consultation with Father Aldrovand, upon the ceremonial, civil and religious, which was to accompany a solemnity of such consequence to her family.

Meanwhile, the reins of discipline, although relaxed for a season, were not entirely thrown loose. The outer court of the convent was indeed for the time opened for the reception of the male sex; but the younger sisters and novices of the house, being carefully secluded in the more inner apartments of the extensive building, under the immediate eye of a grim old nun, or, as the conventual rule designed her, an ancient, sad, and virtuous person, termed Mistress of the Novices, were not permitted to pollute their eyes by looking

on waving plumes and rustling mantles. A few sisters, indeed, of the abbess's own standing were left at liberty, being such goods as it was thought could not, in shopman's phrase, take harm from the air, and which are therefore left lying loose on the counter. These antiquated dames went mumping about with much affected indifference, and a great deal of real curiosity, endeavoring indirectly to get information concerning names, and dresses, and decorations, without daring to show such interest in these vanities as actual questions on the subject might have implied.

A stout band of the Constable's spearmen guarded the gate of the nunnery, admitting within the hallowed precinct the few only who were to be present at the solemnity, with their principal attendants ; and while the former were ushered with all due ceremony into the apartments dressed out for the occasion, the attendants, although detained in the outer court, were liberally supplied with refreshments of the most substantial kind; and had the amusement, so dear to the menial classes, of examining and criticising their masters and mistresses, as they passed into the interior apartments prepared for their reception.

Amongst the domestics who were thus employed were old Raoul the huntsman and his jolly dame : he, gay and glorious, in a new cassock of green velvet, she, gracious and comely, in a kirtle of yellow silk, fringed with minivair, and that at no mean cost, were equally busied in beholding the gay spectacle. The most inveterate wars have their occasional terms of truce, the most bitter and boisterous weather its hours of warmth and of calmness ; and so was it with the matrimonial horizon of this amiable pair, which, usually cloudy, had now for brief space cleared up. The splendor of their new apparel, the mirth of the spectacle around them, with the aid, perhaps, of a bowl of muscadine quaffed by Raoul, and a cup of hippocras sipped by his wife, had rendered them rather more agreeable in each other's eyes than was their wont ; good cheer being in such cases, as oil is to a rusty lock, the means of making those valves move smoothly and glibly which otherwise work not together at all, or by shrieks and groans express their reluctance to move in union. The pair had stuck themselves into a kind of niche, three or four steps from the ground, which contained a small stone bench, whence their curious eyes could scrutinize with advantage every guest who entered the court.

Thus placed, and in their present state of temporary concord, Raoul with his frosty visage formed no unapt repre-

sentative of January, the bitter father of the year; and though Gillian was past the delicate bloom of youthful May, yet the melting fire of a full black eye, and the genial glow of a ripe and crimson cheek, made her a lively type of the fruitful and jovial August. Dame Gillian used to make it her boast, that she could please everybody with her gossip, when she chose it, from Raymond Berenger down to Robin the horse-boy; and like a good housewife, who, to keep her hand in use, will sometimes even condescend to dress a dish for her husband's sole eating, she now thought proper to practice her powers of pleasing on old Raoul, fairly conquering, in her successful sallies of mirth and satire, not only his cynical temperament towards all human kind, but his peculiar and special disposition to be testy with his spouse. Her jokes, such as they were, and the coquetry with which they were enforced, had such an effect on this Timon of the woods, that he curled up his cynical nose, displayed his few straggling teeth like a cur about to bite, broke out into a barking laugh, which was more like the cry of one of his own hounds, stopped short in the explosion, as if he had suddenly recollected that it was out of character; yet, ere he resumed his acrimonious gravity, shot such a glance at Gillian as made his nut-cracker jaws, pinched eyes, and convolved nose bear no small resemblance to one of those fantastic faces which decorate the upper end of old bass viols.

"Is not this better than laying your dog-leash on your loving wife, as if she were a brach of the kennel?" said August to January.

"In troth is it," answered January, in a frost-bitten tone; "and so it is also better than doing the brach-tricks which bring the leash into exercise."

"Humph!" said Gillian, in the tone of one who thought her husband's proposition might bear being disputed; but instantly, changing the note to that of tender complaint, "Ah! Raoul," she said, "do you not remember how you once beat me because our late lord—Our Lady assoilzie him!—took my crimson breast-knot for a peony rose?"

"Ay—ay," said the huntsman; "I remember our old master would make such mistakes—Our Lady assoilzie him! as you say: the best hound will hunt counter."

"And how could you think, dearest Raoul, to let the wife of thy bosom go so long without a new kirtle?" said his helpmate.

"Why, thou hast got one from our young lady that might serve a countess," said Raoul, his concord jarred by her

touching this chord; "how many kirtles wouldst thou have?"

"Only two, kind Raoul, just that folk may not count their children's age by the date of Dame Gillian's last new gown."

"Well—well, it is hard that a man cannot be in good-humor once and away without being made to pay for it. But thou shalt have a new kirtle at Michaelmas, when I sell the bucks' hides for the season. The very antlers should bring a good penny this year."

"Ay—ay," said Gillian; "I ever tell thee, husband, the horns would be worth the hide in a fair market."

Raoul turned briskly round as if a wasp had stung him, and there is no guessing what his reply might have been to this seemingly innocent observation, had not a gallant horseman at that instant entered the court, and, dismounting like the others, gave his horse to the charge of a squire, or equerry, whose attire blazed with embroidery.

"By St. Hubert, a proper horseman, and a *destrier* for an earl," said Raoul, "and my Lord Constable's liveries withal; yet I know not the gallant."

"But I do," said Gillian; "it is Randal de Lacy, the Constable's kinsman, and as good a man as ever came of the name."

"Oh! by St. Hubert, I have heard of him; men say he is a reveler, and a jangler, and a waster of his goods."

"Men lie now and then," said Gillian, dryly.

"And women also," replied Raoul; "why, methinks he winked on thee just now."

"That right eye of thine saw never true since our good lord—St. Mary rest him!—flung a cup of wine in thy face for pressing over boldly into his withdrawing-room."

"I marvel," said Raoul, as if he heard her not, "that yonder ruffler comes hither. I have heard that he is suspected to have attempted the Constable's life, and that they have not spoken together for five years."

"He comes on my young lady's invitation, and that I know full well," said Dame Gillian; "and he is less like to do the Constable wrong than to have wrong at his hand, poor gentleman, as indeed he has had enough of that already."

"And who told thee so?" said Raoul, bitterly.

"No matter, it was one who knew all about it very well," said the dame, who began to fear, that in displaying her triumph of superior information, she had been rather over-communicative.

"It must have been the devil, or Randal himself," said

Raoul, "for no other mouth is large enough for such a lie. But harkye, Dame Gillian, who is he that presses forward next, like a man that scarce sees how he goes?"

"Even your angel of grace, my young Squire Damian," said Dame Gillian.

"It is impossible!" answered Raoul. "Call me blind if thou wilt, but I have never seen man so changed in a few weeks; and his attire is flung on him so wildly as if he wore a horse-cloth round him instead of a mantle. What can ail the youth? He has made a dead pause at the door, as if he saw something on the threshold that debarred his entrance. St. Hubert, but he looks as if he were elf-stricken!"

"You ever thought him such a treasure!" said Gillian; "and now look at him as he stands by the side of a real gentleman, how he stares and trembles as if he were distraught."

"I will speak to him," said Raoul, forgetting his lameness, and springing from his elevated station—"I will speak to him; and, if he be unwell, I have my lancets and fleams to bleed man as well as brute."

"And a fit physician for such a patient," muttered Gillian —"a dog-leech for a dreamy madman, that neither knows his own disease nor the way to cure it."

Meanwhile the old huntsman made his way towards the entrance, before which Damian remained standing, in apparent uncertainty whether he should enter or not regardless of the crowd around, and at the same time attracting their attention by the singularity of his deportment.

Raoul had a private regard for Damian; for which, perhaps, it was a chief reason that of late his wife had been in the habit of speaking of him in a tone more disrespectful than she usually applied to handsome young men. Besides, he understood the youth was a second Sir Tristrem in sylvan sports by wood and river, and there needed no more to fetter Raoul's soul to him with bands of steel. He saw with great concern his conduct attract general notice, mixed with some ridicule.

"He stands," said the town jester, who had crowded into the gay throng, "before the gate like Balaam's ass in the mystery, when the animal sees so much more than can be seen by any one else."

A cut from Raoul's ready leash rewarded the felicity of this application, and sent the fool howling off to seek a more favorable audience for his pleasantry. At the same time Raoul pressed up to Damian, and, with an earnestness very

different from his usual dry causticity of manner, begged him for God's sake not to make himself the general spectacle, by standing there as if the devil sat on the doorway, but either to enter, or, what might be as becoming, to retire, and make himself more fit in apparel for attending on a solemnity so nearly concerning his house.

"And what ails my apparel, old man?" said Damian, turning sternly on the huntsman, as one who has been hastily and unciviley roused from a reverie.

"Only, with respect to your valor," answered the huntsman, "men do not usually put old mantles over new doublets; and methinks, with submission, that of yours neither accords with your dress nor is fitted for this noble presence."

"Thou art a fool!" answered Damian, "and as green in wit as gray in years. Know you not that in these days the young and old consort together—contract together—wed together? and should we take more care to make our apparel consistent than our actions?"

"For God's sake, my lord," said Raoul, "forbear these wild and dangerous words! they may be heard by other ears than mine, and construed by worse interpreters. There may be here those who will pretend to track mischief from light words, as I would find a buck from his frayings. Your cheek is pale, my lord, your eye is bloodshot; for Heaven's sake, retire."

"I will not retire," said Damian, with yet more distemperature of manner, "till I have seen the Lady Eveline."

"For the sake of all the saints," ejaculated Raoul, "not now! You will do my lady incredible injury by forcing yourself into her presence in this condition."

"Do you think so?" said Damian, the remark seeming to operate as a sedative which enabled him to collect his scattered thoughts. "Do you really think so? I thought that to have looked upon her once more—but no, you are in the right, old man."

He turned from the door as if to withdraw, but ere he could accomplish his purpose, he turned yet more pale than before, staggered, and fell on the pavement ere Raoul could afford him his support, useless as that might have proved. Those who raised him were surprised to observe that his garments were soiled with blood, and that the stains upon his cloak, which had been criticised by Raoul, were of the same complexion. A grave-looking personage, wrapped in a sad-colored mantle, came forth from the crowd.

"I knew how it would be," he said; "I made venesection

this morning, and commanded repose and sleep according to the aphorisms of Hippocrates; but if young gentlemen will neglect the ordinance of their physician, medicine will avenge herself. It is impossible that my bandage or ligature, knit by these fingers, should have started, but to avenge the neglect of the precepts of art."

"What means this prate?" said the voice of the Constable, before which all others were silent. He had been summoned forth just as the rite of espousal or betrothing was concluded, on the confusion occasioned by Damian's situation, and now sternly commanded the physician to replace the bandages which had slipped from his nephew's arm, himself assisting in the task of supporting the patient, with the anxious and deeply agitated feelings of one who saw a near and justly valued relative—as yet the heir of his fame and family—stretched before him in a condition so dangerous.

But the griefs of the powerful and the fortunate are often mingled with the impatience of interrupted prosperity. "What means this?" he demanded sternly of the leech. "I sent you this morning to attend my nephew on the first tidings of his illness, and commanded that he should make no attempt to be present on this day's solemnity, yet I find him in this state and in this place."

"So please your lordship," replied the leech, with a conscious self-importance which even the presence of the Constable could not subdue, *Curatio est canonica, non coacta;* which signifieth, my lord, that the physician acteth his cure by rules of art and science, by advice and prescription, but not by force or violence upon the patient, who cannot be at all benefited unless he be voluntarily amenable to the orders of his medicum."

"Tell me not of your jargon," said De Lacy; "if my nephew was light-headed enough to attempt to come hither in the heat of a delirious distemper, you should have had sense to prevent him, had it been by actual force."

"It may be," said Randal de Lacy, joining the crowd, who, forgetting the cause which had brought them together, were now assembled about Damian, "that more powerful was the magnet which drew our kinsman hither than aught the leech could do to withhold him."

The Constable, still busied about his nephew, looked up as Randal spoke, and, when he was done, asked, with formal coldness of manner, "Ha, fair kinsman, of what magnet do you speak?"

"Surely of your nephew's love and regard to your lordship," answered Randal, "which, not to mention his respect for the Lady Eveline, must have compelled him hither, if his limbs were able to bear him. And here the bride comes, I think, in charity, to thank him for his zeal."

"What unhappy case is this?" said the Lady Eveline, pressing forward, much disordered with the intelligence of Damian's danger, which had been suddenly conveyed to her. "Is there nothing in which my poor service may avail?"

"Nothing, lady," said the Constable, rising from beside his nephew, and taking her hand; "your kindness is here mistimed. This motley assembly, this unseeming confusion, become not your presence."

"Unless it could be helpful, my lord," said Eveline, eagerly. "It is your nephew who is in danger—my deliverer—one of my deliverers, I would say."

"He is fitly attended by his chirurgeon," said the Constable, leading back his reluctant bride into the convent; while the medical attendant triumphantly exclaimed—

"Well judgeth my Lord Constable, to withdraw his noble lady from the host of petticoated empirics, who, like so many Amazons, break in upon and derange the regular course of physical practise, with their petulant prognostics, their rash recipes, their mithridate, their febrifuges, their amulets, and their charms. Well speaketh the ethnic poet,

Non audet, nisi quæ [qui] didicit, dare: quod medicorum est
Promittunt medici: tractant fabrilia fabri.

As he repeated these lines with much emphasis, the doctor permitted his patient's arm to drop from his hand, that he might aid the cadence with a flourish of his own. "There," said he to the spectators, "is what none of you understand—no, by St. Luke, nor the Constable himself."

"But he knows how to whip in a hound that babbles when he should be busy," said Raoul; and, silenced by this hint, the chirurgeon betook himself to his proper duty of superintending the removal of young Damian to an apartment in the neighboring street, where the symptoms of his disorder seemed rather to increase than diminish, and speedily required all the skill and attention which the leech could bestow.

The subscription of the contract of marriage had, as already noticed, been just concluded, when the company assembled on the occasion were interrupted by the news of Damian's illness. When the Constable led his bride from

the courtyard into the apartment where the company was assembled, there was discomposure and uneasiness on the countenance of both; and it was not a little increased by the bride pulling her hand hastily from the hold of the bridegroom, on observing that the latter was stained with recent blood, and had in truth left the same stamp upon her own. With a faint exclamation she showed the marks to Rose, saying at the same time, "What bodes this? Is this the revenge of the Bloody-Finger already commencing?"

"It bodes nothing, my dearest lady," said Rose; "it is our own fears that are prophets, not those trifles which we take for augury. For God's sake, speak to my lord! He is surprised at your agitation."

"Let him ask me the cause himself," said Eveline; "fitter it should be told at his bidding than be offered by me unasked."

The Constable, while his bride stood thus conversing with her maiden, had also observed that, in his anxiety to assist his nephew, he had transferred part of his blood from his own hands to Eveline's dress. He came forward to apologize for what at such a moment seemed almost ominous. "Fair lady," said he, "the blood of a true De Lacy can never bode aught but peace and happiness to you."

Eveline seemed as if she would have answered, but could not immediately find words. The faithful Rose, at the risk of incurring the censure of being over-forward, hastened to reply to the compliment. "Every damsel is bound to believe what you say, my noble lord," was her answer, "knowing how readily that blood hath ever flowed for protecting the distressed, and so lately for our own relief."

"It is well spoken, little one," answered the Constable; "and the Lady Eveline is happy in a maiden who so well knows how to speak when it is her own pleasure to be silent. Come, lady," he added, "let us hope this mishap of my kinsman is but like a sacrifice to fortune, which permits not the brightest hour to pass without some intervening shadow. Damian, I trust, will speedily recover; and be we mindful that the blood-drops which alarm you have been drawn by a friendly steel, and are symptoms rather of recovery than of illness. Come, dearest lady, your silence discourages our friends, and wakes in them doubts whether we be sincere in the welcome due to them. Let me be your sewer," he said; and, taking a silver ewer and napkin from the standing cupboard, which was loaded with plate, he presented them on his knee to his bride.

Exerting herself to shake off the alarm into which she had been thrown by some supposed coincidence of the present accident with the apparition of Baldringham, Eveline, entering into her betrothed husband's humor, was about to raise him from the ground, when he was interrupted by the arrival of a hasty messenger, who, coming into the room without ceremony, informed the Constable that his nephew was so extremely ill, that, if he hoped to see him alive, it would be necessary he should come to his lodgings instantly.

The Constable started up, made a brief adieu to Eveline and to the guests, who, dismayed at this new and disastrous intelligence, were preparing to disperse themselves, when, as he advanced towards the door, he was met by a paritor, or summoner of the ecclesiastical court, whose official dress had procured him unobstructed entrance into the precincts of the abbey.

"*Deus vobiscum,*" said the paritor; "I would know which of this fair company is the Constable of Chester!"

"I am he," answered the elder De Lacy; "but if thy business be not the more hasty, I cannot now speak with thee: I am bound on matters of life and death."

"I take all Christian people to witness that I have discharged my duty," said the paritor, putting into the hand of the Constable a slip of parchment.

"How is this, fellow?" said the Constable, in great indignation: "for whom or what does your master the Archbishop take me, that he deals with me in this uncourteous fashion, citing me to compear before him more like a delinquent than a friend or a nobleman?"

"My gracious lord," answered the paritor, haughtily, "is accountable to no one but our Holy Father the Pope for the exercise of the power which is entrusted to him by the canons of the church. Your lordship's answer to my citation?"

"Is the Archbishop present in this city?" said the Constable, after a moment's reflection. "I knew not of his purpose to travel hither, still less of his purpose to exercise authority within these bounds."

"My gracious lord the Archbishop," said the paritor, "is but now arrived in this city, of which he is metropolitan; and, besides, by his apostolical commission, a legate *a latere* hath plenary jurisdiction throughout all England, as those may find, whatsoever be their degree, who may dare to disobey his summons."

"Hark thee, fellow," said the Constable, regarding the paritor with a grim and angry countenance, "were it not for certain respects, which I promise thee thy tawny hood hath little to do with, thou wert better have swallowed thy citation, seal and all, than delivered it to me with the addition of such saucy terms. Go hence, and tell your master I will see him within the space of an hour, during which time I am delayed by the necessity of attending a sick relation."

The paritor left the apartment with more humility in his manner than when he had entered, and left the assembled guests to look upon each other in silence and dismay.

The reader cannot fail to remember how severely the yoke of the Roman supremacy pressed both on the clergy and laity of England during the reign of Henry II. Even the attempt of that wise and courageous monarch to make a stand for the independence of his throne in the memorable case of Thomas à Becket had such an unhappy issue that, like a suppressed rebellion, it was found to add new strength to the domination of the church. Since the submission of the king in that ill-fated struggle, the voice of Rome had double potency whenever it was heard, and the boldest peers of England held it more wise to submit to her imperious dictates than to provoke a spiritual censure which had so many secular consequences, Hence the slight and scornful manner in which the Constable was treated by the prelate Baldwin struck a chill of astonishment into the assembly of friends whom he had collected to witness his espousals; and as he glanced his haughty eye around, he saw that many who would have stood by him through life and death in any other quarrel, had it even been with his sovereign, were turning pale at the very thought of a collision with the church. Embarrassed, and at the same time incensed at their timidity, the Constable hasted to dismiss them, with the general assurance that all would be well; that his nephew's indisposition was a trifling complaint, exaggerated by a conceited physician and by his own want of care; and that the message of the Archbishop, so unceremoniously delivered, was but the consequence of their mutual and friendly familiarity, which induced them sometimes, for the jest's sake, to reverse or neglect the ordinary forms of intercourse. "If I wanted to speak with the prelate Baldwin on express business and in haste, such is the humility and indifference to form of that worthy pillar of the church, that I should not fear offense," said the Constable, "did I send the meanest horse-boy in my troop to ask an audience of him."

So he spoke, but there was something in his countenance which contradicted his words; and his friends and relations retired from the splendid and joyful ceremony of his espousals as from a funeral feast, with anxious thoughts and with downcast eyes.

Randal was the only person who, having attentively watched the whole progress of the affair during the evening, ventured to approach his cousin as he left the house, and asked him, "In the name of their reunited friendship, whether he had nothing to command him?" assuring him, with a look more expressive than his words, that he would not find him cold in his service.

"I have naught which can exercise your zeal, fair cousin," replied the Constable, with the air of one who partly questioned the speaker's sincerity; and the parting reverence with which he accompanied his words left Randal no pretext for continuing his attendance, as he seemed to have designed.

CHAPTER XVIII

Oh, were I seated high as my ambition,
I'd place this naked foot on necks of monarchs!
Mysterious Mother.

THE most anxious and unhappy moment of Hugo de Lacy's life was unquestionably that in which, by espousing Eveline with all civil and religious solemnity, he seemed to approach to what for some time he had considered as the prime object of his wishes. He was assured of the early possession of a beautiful and amiable wife, endowed with such advantage of worldly goods as gratified his ambition as well as his affections. Yet, even in this fortunate moment, the horizon darkened around him in a manner which presaged naught but storm and calamity. At his nephew's lodging he learned that the pulse of the patient had risen, and his delirium had augmented, and all around him spoke very doubtfully of his chance of recovery, or surviving a crisis which seemed speedily approaching. The Constable stole towards the door of the apartment which his feelings permitted him not to enter, and listened to the raving which the fever gave rise to. Nothing can be more melancholy than to hear the mind at work concerning its ordinary occupations when the body is stretched in pain and danger upon the couch of severe sickness: the contrast betwixt the ordinary state of health, its joys or its labors, renders doubly affecting the actual helplessness of the patient before whom these visions are rising, and we feel a corresponding degree of compassion for the sufferer whose thoughts are wandering so far from his real condition.

The Constable felt this acutely, as he heard his nephew shout the war-cry of the family repeatedly, appearing, by the words of command and direction which he uttered from time to time, to be actively engaged in leading his men-at-arms against the Welsh. At another time he muttered various terms of the *manege*, of falconry, and of the chase; he mentioned his uncle's name repeatedly on these occasions, as if the idea of his kinsman had been connected alike with his martial encounters and with his sports by wood and river.

Other sounds there were, which he muttered so low as to be altogether undistinguishable.

With a heart even still more softened towards his kinsman's sufferings from hearing the points on which his mind wandered, the Constable twice applied his hand to the latch of the door, in order to enter the bedroom, and twice forbore, his eyes running faster with tears than he chose should be witnessed by the attendants. At length, relinquishing his purpose, he hastily left the house, mounted his horse, and, followed only by four of his personal attendants, rode towards the palace of the bishop, where, as he learned from public rumor, the arch-prelate Baldwin had taken up his temporary residence.

The train of riders and of led horses, of sumpter-mules, and of menials and attendants, both lay and ecclesiastical, which thronged around the gate of the episcopal mansion, together with the gaping crowd of inhabitants who had gathered around, some to gaze upon the splendid show, some to have the chance of receiving the benediction of the holy prelate, was so great as to impede the Constable's approach to the palace door ; and when this obstacle was surmounted, he found another in the obstinacy of the Archbishop's attendants, who permitted him not, though announced by name and title, to cross the threshold of the mansion until they should receive the express command of their master to that effect.

The Constable felt the full effect of this slighting reception. He had dismounted from his horse in full confidence of being instantly admitted into the palace at least, if not into the prelate's presence ; and as he now stood on foot among the squires, grooms, and horse-boys of the spiritual lord, he was so much disgusted, that his first impulse was to remount his horse and return to his pavilion, pitched for the time before the city walls, leaving it to the bishop to seek him there, if he really desired an interview. But the necessity of conciliation almost immediately rushed on his mind, and subdued the first haughty impulse of his offended pride. "If our wise king," he said to himself, "hath held the stirrup of one prelate of Canterbury when living, and submitted to the most degrading observances before his shrine when dead, surely I need not be more scrupulous towards his priestly successor in the same overgrown authority." Another thought, which he dared hardly to acknowledge, recommended the same humble and submissive course. He could not but feel that, in endeavoring to evade his vows as

a crusader, he was incurring some just censure from the church; and he was not unwilling to hope that his present cold and scornful reception on Baldwin's part might be meant as a part of the penance which his conscience informed him his conduct was about to receive.

After a short interval, De Lacy was at length invited to enter the palace of the Bishop of Gloucester, in which he was to meet the Primate of England; but there was more than one brief pause, in hall and ante-room, ere he at length was admitted to Baldwin's presence.

The successor of the celebrated Becket had neither the extensive views nor the aspiring spirit of that redoubted personage; but, on the other hand, saint as the latter had become, it may be questioned whether, in his professions for the weal of Christendom, he was half so sincere as was the present archbishop. Baldwin was, in truth, a man well qualified to defend the powers which the church had gained, though perhaps of a character too sincere and candid to be active in extending them. The advancement of the Crusade was the chief business of his life, his success the principal cause of his pride; and if the sense of possessing the powers of eloquent persuasion, and skill to bend the minds of men to his purpose, was blended with his religious zeal, still the tenor of his life, and afterwards his death before Ptolemais, showed that the liberation of the Holy Sepulcher from the infidels was the unfeigned object of all his exertions. Hugo de Lacy well knew this; and the difficulty of managing such a temper appeared much greater to him on the eve of the interview in which the attempt was to be made than he had suffered himself to suppose when the crisis was yet distant.

The prelate, a man of a handsome and stately form, with features rather too severe to be pleasing, received the Constable in all the pomp of ecclesiastical dignity. He was seated on a chair of oak, richly carved with Gothic ornaments, and placed above the rest of the floor under a niche of the same workmanship. His dress was the rich episcopal robe, ornamented with costly embroidery, and fringed around the neck and cuffs; it opened from the throat and in the middle, and showed an under vestment of embroidery, betwixt the folds of which, as if imperfectly concealed, peeped the close shirt of haircloth which the prelate constantly wore under all his pompous attire. His miter was placed beside him on an oaken table of the same workmanship with his throne, against which also rested his pastoral

staff, representing a shepherd's crook of the simplest form, yet which had proved more powerful and fearful than lance or scimitar, when wielded by the hand of Thomas a' Becket.

A chaplain in a white surplice kneeled at a little distance before a desk, and read forth from an illuminated volume some portion of a theological treatise, in which Baldwin appeared so deeply interested that he did not seem to notice the entrance of the Constable, who, highly displeased at this additional slight, stood on the floor of the hall, undetermined whether to interrupt the reader and address the prelate at once, or to withdraw without saluting him at all. Ere he had formed a resolution, the chaplain had arrived at some convenient pause in the lecture, where the Archbishop stopped him with "*Satis est, mi fili.*"

It was in vain that the proud secular baron strove to conceal the embarrassment with which he approached the prelate, whose attitude was plainly assumed for the purpose of impressing him with awe and solicitude. He tried, indeed, to exhibit a demeanor of such ease as might characterize their old friendship, or at least of such indifference as might infer the possession of perfect tranquillity; but he failed in both, and his address expressed mortified pride, mixed with no ordinary degree of embarrassment. The genius of the Catholic Church was on such occasions sure to predominate over the haughtiest of the laity.

"I perceive," said De Lacy, collecting his thoughts, and ashamed to find he had difficulty in doing so—"I perceive that an old friendship is here dissolved. Methinks Hugo de Lacy might have expected another messenger to summon him to this reverend presence, and that another welcome should wait him on his arrival."

The Archbishop raised himself slowly in his seat, and made a half-inclination towards the Constable, who, by an instinctive desire of conciliation, returned it lower than he had intended, or than the scanty courtesy merited. The prelate at the same time signing to his chaplain, the latter arose to withdraw, and receiving permission in the phrase "*Do veniam,*" retreated reverently, without either turning his back or looking upwards, his eyes fixed on the ground, his hands still folded in his habit and crossed over his bosom.

When this mute attendant had disappeared, the prelate's brow became more open, yet retained a dark shade of grave displeasure, and he replied to the address of De Lacy, but still without rising from his seat. "It skills not now, my

lord, to say what the brave Constable of Chester has been to the poor priest Baldwin, or with what love and pride we beheld him assume the holy sign of salvation, and, to honor Him by whom he has himself been raised to honor, vow himself to the deliverance of the Holy Land. If I still see that noble lord before me in the same holy resolution, let me know the joyful truth, and I will lay aside rochet and miter, and tend his horse like a groom, if it be necessary by such menial service to show the cordial respect I bear to him."

"Reverend father," answered De Lacy, with hesitation, "I had hoped that the propositions which were made to you on my part by the Dean of Hereford might have seemed more satisfactory in your eyes." Then regaining his native confidence, he proceeded with more assurance in speech and manner, for the cold, inflexible looks of the Archbishop irritated him, "If these proposals can be amended, my lord, let me know in what points, and, if possible, your pleasure shall be done, even if it should prove somewhat unreasonable. I would have peace, my lord, with Holy Church, and am the last who would despise her mandates. This has been known by my deeds in field and counsels in the state; nor can I think my services have merited cold looks and cold language from the Primate of England."

"Do you upbraid the church with your services, vain man?" said Baldwin. "I tell thee, Hugo de Lacy, that what Heaven hath wrought for the church by thy hand could, had it been the divine pleasure, have been achieved with as much ease by the meanest horse-boy in thy host. It is *thou* that art honored, in being the chosen instrument by which great things have been wrought in Israel. Nay, interrupt me not. I tell thee, proud baron, that, in the sight of Heaven, thy wisdom is but as folly, thy courage, which thou dost boast, but the cowardice of a village maiden, thy strength weakness, thy spear an osier, and thy sword a bulrush."

"All this I know, good father," said the Constable, "and have ever heard it repeated when such poor services as I may have rendered are gone and past. Marry, when there was need for my helping hand, I was the very good lord of priest and prelate, and one who should be honored and prayed for with patrons and founders who sleep in the choir and under the high altar. There was no thought, I trow, of osier or of bulrush, when I have been prayed to couch my lance or draw my weapon; it is only when they are needless that they and their owner are undervalued. Well, my rev-

erend father, be it so; if the church can cast the Saracens from the Holy Land by grooms and horse-boys, wherefore do you preach knights and nobles from the homes and the countries which they are born to protect and defend?"

The Archbishop looked steadily on him as he replied, "Not for the sake of their fleshly arm do we disturb your knights and barons in their prosecution of barbarous festivities and murderous feuds, which you call enjoying their homes and protecting their domains—not that Omnipotence requires their arm of flesh to execute the great predestined work of liberation, but for the weal of their immortal souls." These last words he pronounced with great emphasis.

The Constable paced the floor impatiently, and muttered to himself, "Such is the airy guerdon for which hosts on hosts have been drawn from Europe to drench the sands of Palestine with their gore; such the vain promises for which we are called upon to barter our country, our lands, and our lives!"

"Is it Hugo de Lacy speaks thus?" said the Archbishop, arising from his seat, and qualifying his tone of censure with the appearance of shame and of regret. "Is it he who under-prizes the renown of a knight, the virtue of a Christian, the advancement of his earthly honor, the more incalculable profit of his immortal soul? Is it he who desires a solid and substantial recompense in lands or treasure, to be won by warring on his less powerful neighbors at home, while knightly honor and religious faith, his vow as a knight and his baptism as a Christian, call him to a more glorious and more dangerous strife? Can it be indeed Hugo de Lacy, the mirror of the Anglo-Norman chivalry, whose thoughts can conceive such sentiments, whose words can utter them?"

"Flattery and fair speech, suitably mixed with taunts and reproaches, my lord," answered the Constable, coloring and biting his lip, "may carry your point with others; but I am of a temper too solid to be either wheedled or goaded into measures of importance. Forbear, therefore, this strain of affected amazement; and believe me, that, whether he goes to the Crusade or abides at home, the character of Hugo Lacy will remain as unimpeached in point of courage as that of the Archbishop Baldwin in point of sanctitude."

"May it stand much higher," said the Archbishop, "than the reputation with which you vouchsafe to compare it! But a blaze may be extinguished as well as a spark; and I tell the Constable of Chester, that the fame which

has sat on his basnet for so many years may flit from it in one moment, never to be recalled."

"Who dares to say so?" said the Constable, tremblingly alive to the honor for which he had encountered so many dangers.

"A friend," said the Prelate, "whose stripes should be received as benefits. You think of pay, sir Constable, and of guerdon, as if you still stood in the market, free to chaffer on the terms of your service. I tell you, you are no longer your own master: you are, by the blessed badge you have voluntarily assumed, the soldier of God Himself; nor can you fly from your standard without such infamy as even coistrels or grooms are unwilling to incur."

"You deal all too hardly with us, my lord," said Hugo de Lacy, stopping short in his troubled walk. "You of the spirituality make us laymen the packhorses of your own concerns, and climb to ambitious heights by the help of our overburdened shoulders. But all hath its limits; Becket transgressed it, and——"

A gloomy and expressive look corresponded with the tone in which he spoke this broken sentence; and the prelate, at no loss to comprehend his meaning, replied, in a firm and determined voice, "And he was *murdered!* that is what you dare to hint to me—even to me, the successor of that glorified saint—as a motive for complying with your fickle and selfish wish to withdraw your hand from the plow. You know not to whom you address such a threat. True, Becket, from a saint militant on earth, arrived, by the bloody path of martyrdom, to the dignity of a saint in Heaven; and no less true is it that, to attain a seat a thousand degrees beneath that of his blessed predecessor, the unworthy Baldwin were willing to submit, under Our Lady's protection, to whatever the worst of wicked men can inflict on his earthly frame."

"There needs not this show of courage, reverend father," said De Lacy, recollecting himself, "where there neither is nor can be danger. I pray you, let us debate this matter more deliberately. I have never meant to break off my purpose for the Holy Land, but only to postpone it. Methinks the offers that I have made are fair, and ought to obtain for me what has been granted to others in the like case—a slight delay in the time of my departure."

"A slight delay on the part of such a leader as you, noble De Lacy," answered the prelate, "were a death-blow to our holy and most gallant enterprise. To meaner men we might

have granted tne privilege of marrying and giving in marriage, even although they care not for the sorrows of Jacob; but you, my lord, are a main prop of our enterprise, and, being withdrawn, the whole fabric may fall to the ground. Who in England will deem himself obliged to press forward, when Hugo de Lacy falls back? Think, my lord, less upon your plighted bride, and more on your plighted word; and believe not that a union can ever come to good which shakes your purpose towards our blessed undertaking for the honor of Christendom."

The Constable was embarrassed by the pertinacity of the prelate, and began to give way to his arguments, though most reluctantly, and only because the habits and opinions of the time left him no means of combating his arguments otherwise than by solicitation. "I admit," he said, "my engagements for the Crusade, nor have I—I repeat it—further desire than that brief interval which may be necessary to place my important affairs in order. Meanwhile, my vassals led by my nephew——"

"Promise that which is within thy power," said the prelate. "Who knows whether, in resentment of thy seeking after other things than His most holy cause, thy nephew may not be called hence, even while we speak together?"

"God forbid!" said the baron, starting up, as if about to fly to his nephew's assistance; then suddenly pausing, he turned on the prelate a keen and investigating glance. "It is not well," he said, "that your reverence should thus trifle with the dangers which threaten my house. Damian is dear to me for his own good qualities—dear for the sake of my only brother. May God forgive us both! he died when we were in unkindness with each other. My lord, your words import that my beloved nephew suffers pain and incurs danger on account of my offenses?"

The Archbishop perceived he had at length touched the chord to which his refractory penitent's heart-strings must needs vibrate. He replied with circumspection, as well knowing with whom he had to deal—"Far be it from me to presume to interpret the councils of Heaven! but we read in Scripture, that when the fathers eat sour grapes, the teeth of the children are set on edge. What so reasonable as that we should be punished for our pride and contumacy, by a judgment specially calculated to abate and bend that spirit of surquedry? You yourself best know if this disease clung to thy nephew before you had meditated defection from the banner of the Cross."

Hugo de Lacy hastily recollected himself, and found that it was indeed true that, until he thought of his union with Eveline, there had appeared no change in his nephew's health. His silence and confusion did not escape the artful prelate. He took the hand of the warrior, as he stood before him overwhelmed in doubt, lest his preference of the continuance of his own house to the rescue of the Holy Sepulcher should have been punished by the disease which threatened his nephew's life. "Come," he said, "noble De Lacy, the judgment provoked by a moment's presumption may be even yet averted by prayer and penitence. The dial went back at the prayer of the good King Hezekiah; down—down upon thy knees, and doubt not that, with confession, and penance, and absolution, thou mayst yet atone for thy falling away from the cause of Heaven."

Borne down by the dictates of the religion in which he had been educated, and by the fears lest his delay was punished by his nephew's indisposition and danger, the Constable sunk on his knees before the prelate, whom he had shortly before well-nigh braved, confessed, as a sin to be deeply repented of, his purpose of delaying his departure for Palestine, and received, with patience at least, if not with willing acquiescence, the penance inflicted by the Archbishop, which consisted in a prohibition to proceed farther in his proposed wedlock with the Lady Eveline, until he was returned from Palestine, where he was bound by his vow to abide for the term of three years.

"And now, noble De Lacy," said the prelate, "once more my best beloved and most honored friend, is not thy bosom lighter since thou hast thus nobly acquitted thee of thy debt to Heaven, and cleansed thy gallant spirit from those selfish and earthly stains which dimmed its brightness?"

The Constable sighed. "My happiest thoughts at this moment," he said, "would arise from knowledge that my nephew's health is amended."

"Be not discomforted on the score of the noble Damian, your hopeful and valorous kinsman," said the Archbishop, "for well I trust shortly ye shall hear of his recovery; or that, if it shall please God to remove him to a better world, the passage shall be so easy, and his arrival in yonder haven of bliss so speedy, that it were better for him to have died than to have lived."

The Constable looked at him, as if to gather from his countenance more certainty of his nephew's fate than his

words seemed to imply; and the prelate, to escape being farther pressed on a subject on which he was perhaps conscious he had adventured too far, rung a silver bell which stood before him on the table, and commanded the chaplain who entered at the summons that he should despatch a careful messenger to the lodging of Damian Lacy, to bring particular accounts of his health.

"A stranger," answered the chaplain, "just come from the sick-chamber of the noble Damian Lacy, waits here even now to have speech of my Lord Constable."

"Admit him instantly," said the Archbishop; "my mind tells me he brings us joyful tidings. Never knew I such humble penitence, such willing resignation of natural affections and desires to the doing of Heaven's service, but it was rewarded with a guerdon either temporal or spiritual."

As he spoke, a man singularly dressed entered the apartment. His garments, of various colors and showily disposed, were not of the newest or cleanest, neither were they altogether fitting for the presence in which he now stood.

"How now, sirrah!" said the prelate; "when was it that jugglers and minstrels pressed into the company of such as we without permission?"

"So please you," said the man, "my instant business was not with your reverend lordship, but with my lord the Constable, to whom I will hope that my good news may atone for my evil apparel."

"Speak, sirrah, does my kinsman live?" said the Constable, eagerly.

"And is like to live, my lord," answered the man: "a favorable crisis, so the leeches call it, hath taken place in his disorder, and they are no longer under any apprehensions for his life."

"Now, God be praised, that hath granted me so much mercy!" said the Constable.

"Amen — amen!" replied the Archbishop, solemnly. "About what period did this blessed change take place?"

"Scarcely a quarter of an hour since," said the messenger, "a soft sleep fell on the sick youth, like dew upon a parched field in summer; he breathes freely, the burning heat abated, and, as I said, the leeches no longer fear for his life."

"Marked you the hour, my Lord Constable?" said the bishop, with exultation; "even then you stooped to those counsels which Heaven suggested through the meanest of its servants! But two words avouching penitence, but one

brief prayer, and some kind saint has interceded for an instant hearing and a liberal granting of thy petition. Noble Hugo," he continued, grasping his hand in a species of enthusiasm, "surely Heaven designs to work high things by the hand of him whose faults are thus readily forgiven, whose prayer is thus instantly heard. For this shall *Te Deum Laudamus* be said in each church and each convent of Gloucester ere the world be a day older."

The Constable, no less joyful, though perhaps less able to perceive an especial providence in his nephew's recovery, expressed his gratitude to the messenger of the good tidings, by throwing him his purse.

"I thank you, noble lord," said the man; "but if I stoop to pick up this taste of your bounty, it is only to restore it again to the donor."

"How now, sir?" said the Constable; "methinks thy coat seems not so well lined as needs make thee spurn at such a guerdon."

"He that designs to catch larks, my lord," replied the messenger, "must not close his net upon sparrows: I have a greater boon to ask of your lordship, and therefore I decline your present gratuity."

"A greater boon, ha!" said the Constable. "I am no knight-errant, to bind myself by promise to grant it ere I know its import; but do thou come to my pavilion tomorrow, and thou wilt not find me unwilling to do what is reason."

So saying, he took leave of the prelate, and returned homeward, failing not to visit his nephew's lodging as he passed, where he received the same pleasant assurances which had been communicated by the messenger of the parti-colored mantle.

CHAPTER XIX

He was a minstrel, in his mood
Was wisdom mix'd with folly—
A tame companion to the good,
But wild and fierce among the rude,
And jovial with the jolly.

ARCHIBALD ARMSTRONG.

THE events of the preceding day had been of a nature so interesting, and latterly so harassing, that the Constable felt weary, as after a severely-contested battle-field, and slept soundly until the earliest beams of dawn saluted him through the opening of the tent. It was then that, with a mingled feeling of pain and satisfaction, he began to review the change which had taken place in his condition since the preceding morning. He had then risen an ardent bridegroom, anxious to find favor in the eyes of his fair bride, and scrupulous about his dress and appointments, as if he had been as young in years as in hopes and wishes. This was over, and he had now before him the painful task of leaving his betrothed for a term of years, even before wedlock had united them indissolubly, and of reflecting that she was exposed to all the dangers which assail female constancy in a situation thus critical. When the immediate anxiety for his nephew was removed, he was tempted to think that he had been something hasty in listening to the arguments of the Archbishop, and in believing that Damian's death or recovery depended upon his own accomplishing, to the letter, and without delay, his vow for the Holy Land. "How many princes and kings," he thought to himself, "have assumed the cross, and delayed or renounced it, yet lived and died in wealth and honor, without sustaining such a visitation as that with which Baldwin threatened me; and in what case or particular did such men deserve more indulgence than I? But the die is now cast, and it signifies little to inquire whether my obedience to the mandates of the church has saved the life of my nephew, or whether I have not fallen, as laymen are wont to fall, whenever there is an encounter of wits betwixt them and those of the spirituality. I would to God it may prove otherwise, since, girding on my

sword as Heaven's champion, I might the better expect Heaven's protection for her whom I must unhappily leave behind me."

As these reflections passed through his mind, he heard the warders at the entrance of his tent challenge some one whose footsteps were heard approaching it. The person stopped on their challenge, and presently after was heard the sound of a rote (a small species of lute), the strings of which were managed by means of a small wheel. After a short prelude, a manly voice, of good compass, sung verses, which, translated into modern language, might run nearly thus :

Soldier, wake ! The day is peeping,
Honor ne'er was won in sleeping,
Never when the sunbeams still
Lay unreflected on the hill :
'Tis when they are glinted back
From ax and armor, spear and jack,
That they promise future story,
Many a page of deathless glory.
Shields that are the foeman's terror
Ever are the morning's mirror.

Arm and up ! The morning beam
Hath call'd the rustic to his team,
Hath call'd the falc'ner to the lake,
Hath call'd the huntsman to the brake ;
The early student ponders o'er
His dusty tomes of ancient lore.
Soldier, wake ! Thy harvest, fame ;
Thy study, conquest ; war, thy game.
Shield, that would be foeman's terror,
Still should gleam the morning's mirror.

Poor hire repays the rustic's pain,
More paltry still the sportsman's gain,
Vainest of all, the student's theme
Ends in some metaphysic dream ;
Yet each is up, and each has toil'd
Since first the peep of dawn has smiled
And each is eagerer in his aim
Than he who barters life for fame.
Up, up, and arm thee, son of terror !
Be thy bright shield the morning's mirror.

When the song was finished, the constable heard some talking without, and presently Philip Guarine entered the pavilion to tell that a person, come hither as he said by the Constable's appointment, waited permission to speak with him.

"By my appointment?" said De Lacy. "Admit him immediately."

The messenger of the preceding evening entered the tent, holding in one hand his small cap and feather, in the other the rote on which he had been just playing. His attire was fantastic, consisting of more than one inner dress of various colors, all of the brightest and richest dyes, and disposed so as to contrast with each other; the upper garment was a very short Norman cloak of bright green. An embroidered girdle sustained, in lieu of offensive weapons, an inkhorn with its appurtenances on the one side, on the other a knife for the purposes of the table. His hair was cut in imitation of the clerical tonsure, which was designed to intimate that he had arrived to a certain rank in his profession; for the joyous science, as the profession of minstrelsy was termed, had its various ranks, like the degrees in the church and in chivalry. The features and manners of the man seemed to be at variance with his profession and habit; for, as the latter was gay and fantastic, the former had a cast of gravity, and almost of sternness, which, unless when kindled by the enthusiasm of his poetical and musical exertions, seemed rather to indicate deep reflection than the thoughtless vivacity of observation which characterized most of his brethren. His countenance, though not handsome, had therefore something in it striking and impressive, even from its very contrast with the parti-colored hues and fluttering shape of his vestments; and the Constable felt something inclined to patronize him, as he said, "Good-morrow, friend, and I thank thee for thy morning greeting; it was well sung and well meant, for when we call forth any one to bethink him how time passes, we do him the credit of supposing that he can employ to advantage that flitting treasure."

The man, who had listened in silence, seemed to pause and make an effort ere he replied, "My intentions, at least, were good, when I ventured to disturb my lord thus early; and I am glad to learn that my boldness hath not been evil received at his hand."

"True," said the Constable, "you had a boon to ask of me. Be speedy, and say thy request: my leisure is short."

"It is for permission to follow you to the Holy Land, my lord," said the man.

"Thou hast asked what I can hardly grant, my friend," answered De Lacy. "Thou art a minstrel, art thou not?"

"An unworthy graduate of the gay science, my lord," said the musician; "yet let me say for myself, that I will not

yield to the king of minstrels, Geoffrey Rudel, though the King of England hath given him four manors for one song. I would be willing to contend with him in romance, lay, or fable, were the judge to be King Henry himself."

"You have your own good word, doubtless," said De Lacy; "nevertheless, sir minstrel, thou goest not with me. The Crusade has been already too much encumbered by men of thy idle profession; and if thou dost add to the number, it shall not be under my protection. I am too old to be charmed by thy art, charm thou never so wisely."

"He that is young enough to seek for and to win the love of beauty," said the minstrel, but in a submissive tone, as if fearing his freedom might give offense, "should not term himself too old to feel the charms of minstrelsy."

The Constable smiled, not insensible to the flattery which assigned to him the character of a younger gallant. "Thou art a jester," he said, "I warrant me, in addition to thy other qualities?"

"No," replied the minstrel, "it is a branch of our profession which I have for some time renounced: my fortunes have put me out of tune for jesting."

"Nay, comrade," said the Constable, "if thou hast been hardly dealt with in the world, and canst comply with the rules of a family so strictly ordered as mine, it is possible we may agree together better than I thought. What is thy name and country? Thy speech, methinks, sounds somewhat foreign."

"I am an Armorican, my lord, from the merry shores of Morbihan; and hence my tongue hath some touch of my country speech. My name is, Renault Vidal."

"Such being the case, Renault," said the Constable, "thou shalt follow me, and I will give orders to the master of my household to have thee attired something according to thy function, but in more orderly guise than thou now appearest in. Dost thou understand the use of a weapon?"

"Indifferently, my lord," said the Armorican; at the same time taking a sword from the wall, he drew it, and made a pass with it so close to the Constable's body, as he sat on the couch, that he started up, crying, "Villain, forbear!"

"La you! noble sir," replied Vidal, lowering with all submission the point of his weapon, "I have already given you a proof of sleight which has alarmed even your experience; I have an hundred other besides."

"It may be so," said De Lacy, somewhat ashamed at

having shown himself moved by the sudden and lively action of the juggler ; "but I love not jesting with edge-tools, and have too much to do with sword and sword-blows in earnest to toy with them ; so I pray you let us have no more of this, but call me my squire and my chamberlain, for I am about to array me and go to mass."

The religious duties of the morning performed, it was the Constable's intention to visit the lady abbess, and communicate, with the necessary precautions and qualifications, the altered relations in which he was placed towards her niece, by the resolution he had been compelled to adopt, of departing for the Crusade before accomplishing his marriage, in the terms of the precontract already entered into. He was conscious that it would be difficult to reconcile the good lady to this change of measures, and he delayed some time ere he could think of the best mode of communicating and softening the unpleasant intelligence. An interval was also spent in a visit to his nephew, whose state of convalescence continued to be as favorable as if in truth it had been a miraculous consequence of the Constable's having complied with the advice of the Archbishop.

From the lodging of Damian, the Constable proceeded to the convent of the Benedictine abbess. But she had been already made acquainted with the circumstances which he came to communicate, by a still earlier visit from the Archbishop Baldwin himself. The Primate had undertaken the office of mediator on this occasion, conscious that his success of the evening before must have placed the Constable in a delicate situation with the relations of his betrothed bride, and willing, by his countenance and authority, to reconcile the disputes which might ensue. Perhaps he had better have left Hugo de Lacy to plead his own cause ; for the abbess, though she listened to the communication with all the respect due to the highest dignitary of the English Church, drew consequences from the Constable's change of resolution which the Primate had not expected. She ventured to oppose no obstacle to De Lacy's accomplishment of his vows, but strongly argued that the contract with her niece should be entirely set aside, and each party left at liberty to form a new choice.

It was in vain that the Archbishop endeavored to dazzle the abbess with the future honors to be won by the Constable in the Holy Land, the splendor of which would attach not to his lady alone, but to all in the remotest degree allied to or connected with her. All his eloquence was to no

purpose, though upon so favorite a topic he exerted it to the utmost. The abbess, it is true, remained silent for a moment after his arguments had been exhausted, but it was only to consider how she should intimate, in a suitable and reverent manner, that children, the usual attendants of a happy union, and the existence of which she looked to for the continuation of the house of her father and brother, could not be hoped for with any probability unless the pre-contract was followed by marriage, and the residence of the married parties in the same country. She therefore insisted that, the Constable having altered his intentions in this most important particular, the *fiançailles* should be entirely abrogated and set aside ; and she demanded of the Primate, as an act of justice, that, as he had interfered to prevent the bridegroom's execution of his original purpose, he should now assist with his influence wholly to dissolve an engagement which had been thus materially innovated upon.

The Primate, who was sensible he had himself occasioned De Lacy's breach of contract, felt himself bound in honor and reputation to prevent consequences so disagreeable to his friend as the dissolution of an engagement in which his interest and inclinations were alike concerned. He reproved the lady abbess for the carnal and secular views which she, a dignitary of the church, entertained upon the subject of matrimony and concerning the interest of her house. He even upbraided her with selfishly preferring the continuation of the line of Berenger to the recovery of the Holy Sepulcher, and denounced to her that Heaven would be avenged of the short-sighted and merely human policy which postponed the interests of Christendom to those of an individual family.

After this severe homily, the prelate took his departure, leaving the abbess highly incensed, though she prudently forbore returning any irreverent answer to his paternal admonition.

In this humor the venerable lady was found by the Constable himself, when, with some embarrassment, he proceeded to explain to her the necessity of his present departure for Palestine.

She received the communication with sullen dignity, her ample black robe and scapular seeming, as it were, to swell out in yet prouder folds as she listened to the reasons and the emergencies which compelled the Constable of Chester to defer the marriage, which he avowed was the dearest wish of his heart, until after his return from the Crusade, for which he was about to set forth.

"Methinks," replied the abbess, with much coldness, "if this communication is meant for earnest—and it were no fit business, I myself no fit person, for jesting with—methinks the Constable's resolution should have been proclaimed to us yesterday, before the *fiançailles* had united his troth with that of Eveline Berenger, under expectations very different from those which he now announces.

"On the word of a knight and a gentleman, reverend lady," said the Constable, "I had not then the slightest thought that I should be called upon to take a step no less distressing to me than, as I see with pain, it is unpleasing to you."

"I can scarcely conceive," replied the abbess, "the cogent reasons which, existing as they must have done yesterday, have nevertheless delayed their operation until to-day."

"I own," said De Lacy, reluctantly, "that I entertained too ready hopes of obtaining a remission from my vow, which my Lord of Canterbury hath, in his zeal for Heaven's service, deemed it necessary to refuse me."

"At least, then," said the abbess, veiling her resentment under the appearance of extreme coldness, "your lordship will do us the justice to place us in the same situation in which we stood yesterday morning; and, by joining with my niece and her friends in desiring the abrogation of a marriage contract, entered into with very different views from those which you now entertain, put a young person in that state of liberty of which she is at present deprived by her contract with you?"

"Ah, madam!" said the Constable, "what do you ask of me? and in a tone how cold and indifferent do you demand me to resign hopes the dearest which my bosom ever entertained since the life-blood warmed it!"

"I am unacquainted with language belonging to such feelings, my lord," replied the abbess; "but methinks the prospects which could be so easily adjourned for years, might, by a little, and a very little, further self-control be altogether abandoned."

Hugo de Lacy paced the room in agitation, nor did he answer until after a considerable pause. "If your niece, madam, shares the sentiments which you have expressed, I could not, indeed, with justice to her, or perhaps to myself, desire to retain that interest in her which our solemn espousals have given me. But I must know my doom from her own lips; and if it is as severe as that which your expressions lead me to fear, I will go to Palestine the better

soldier of Heaven that I shall have little left on earth that can interest me."

The abbess, without farther answer, called on her precentrix, and desired her to command her niece's attendance immediately. The precentrix bowed reverently and withdrew.

"May I presume to inquire," said De Lacy, "whether the Lady Eveline hath been possessed of the circumstances which have occasioned this unhappy alteration in my purpose?"

"I have communicated the whole to her, from point to point," said the abbess, "even as it was explained to me this morning by my Lord of Canterbury—for with him I have already spoken upon the subject—and confirmed but now by your lordship's own mouth."

"I am little obliged to the Archbishop," said the Constable, "for having forestalled my excuses in the quarter where it was most important for me that they should be accurately stated and favorably received."

"That," said the abbess, "is but an item of the account betwixt you and the prelate; it concerns not us."

"Dare I venture to hope," continued De Lacy, without taking offense at the dryness of the abbess's manner, "that Lady Eveline has heard this most unhappy change of circumstances without emotion—I would say, without displeasure?"

"She is the daughter of a Berenger, my lord," answered the abbess, "and it is our custom to punish a breach of faith or to contemn it, never to grieve over it. What my niece may do in this case I know not. I am a woman of religion, sequestered from the world, and would advise peace and Christian forgiveness, with a proper sense of contempt for the unworthy treatment which she has received. She has followers and vassals, and friends, doubtless, and advisers, who may not, in blinded zeal for worldly honor, recommend to her to sit down slightly with this injury, but desire she should rather appeal to the king, or to the arms of her father's followers, unless her liberty is restored to her by the surrender of the contract into which she has been enticed. But she comes to answer for herself."

Eveline entered at the moment, leaning on Rose's arm. She had laid aside mourning since the ceremony of the *fiançailles*, and was dressed in a kirtle of white, with an upper robe of pale blue. Her head was covered with a

veil of white gauze so thin as to float about her like the misty cloud usually painted around the countenance of a seraph. But the face of Eveline, though in beauty not unworthy one of this angelic order, was at present far from resembling that of a seraph in tranquillity of expression. Her limbs trembled, her cheeks were pale, the tinge of red around the eyelids expressed recent tears ; yet, amidst these natural signs of distress and uncertainty, there was an air of profound resignation—a resolution to discharge her duty in every emergence reigning in the solemn expression of her eye and eyebrow, and showing her prepared to govern the agitation which she could not entirely subdue. And so well were these opposing qualities of timidity and resolution mingled on her cheek, that Eveline, in the utmost pride of her beauty, never looked more fascinating than at that instant ; and Hugo de Lacy, hitherto rather an unimpassioned lover, stood in her presence with feelings as if all the exaggerations of romance were realized, and his mistress were a being of a higher sphere, from whose doom he was to receive happiness or misery, life or death.

It was under the influence of such a feeling that the warrior dropped on one knee before Eveline, took the hand which she rather resigned than gave to him, pressed it to his lips fervently, and ere he parted with it, moistened it with one of the few tears which he was ever known to shed. But, although surprised, and carried out of his character by a sudden impulse, he regained his composure on observing that the abbess regarded his humiliation, if it can be so termed, with an air of triumph ; and he entered on his defense before Eveline with a manly earnestness, not devoid of fervor, nor free from agitation, yet made in a tone of firmness and pride which seemed assumed to meet and control that of the offended abbess.

"Lady," he said, addressing Eveline, "you have heard from the venerable abbess in what unhappy position I have been placed since yesterday by the rigor of the Archbishop—perhaps I should rather say by his just though severe interpretation of my engagement in the Crusade. I cannot doubt that all this has been stated with accurate truth by the venerable lady ; but, as I must no longer call her my friend, let me fear whether she has done me justice in her commentary upon the unhappy necessity which must presently compel me to leave my country, and with my country to forego—at best to postpone—the fairest hopes which man ever entertained. The venerable lady hath upbraided me,

that, being myself the cause that the execution of yesterday's contract is postponed, I would fain keep it suspended over your head for an indefinite term of years. No one resigns willingly such rights as yesterday gave me; and, let me speak a boastful word, sooner than yield them up to or man or woman born, I would hold a fair field against all comers, with grinded sword and sharp spear, from sunrise to sunset, for three days' space. But what I would retain at the price of a thousand lives, I am willing to renounce if it would cost you a single sigh. If, therefore, you think you cannot remain happy as the betrothed of De Lacy, you may command my assistance to have the contract annulled, and make some more fortunate man happy."

He would have gone on, but felt the danger of being overpowered again by those feelings of tenderness so new to his steady nature, that he blushed to give way to them.

Eveline remained silent.

The abbess took the word. "Kinswoman," she said, "you hear that the generosity, or the justice, of the Constable of Chester proposes, in consequence of his departure upon a distant and perilous expedition, to cancel a contract entered into upon the specific and precise understanding that he was to remain in England for its fulfilment. You cannot, methinks, hesitate to accept of the freedom which he offers you, with thanks for his bounty. For my part, I will reserve mine own until I shall see that your joint application is sufficient to win to your purpose his Grace of Canterbury, who may again interfere with the actions of his friend the Lord Constable, over whom he has already exerted so much influence, for the weal, doubtless, of his spiritual concerns."

"If it is meant by your words, venerable lady," said the Constable, "that I have any purpose of sheltering myself behind the prelate's authority, to avoid doing that which I proclaim my readiness, though not my willingness, to do, I can only say that you are the first who has doubted the faith of Hugo de Lacy." And while the proud baron thus addressed a female and a recluse, he could not prevent his eye from sparkling and his cheek from flushing.

"My gracious and venerable kinswoman," said Eveline, summoning together her resolution, "and you, my good lord, be not offended, if I pray you not to increase by groundless suspicions and hasty resentments your difficulties and mine. My lord, the obligations which I lie under to you are such as I can never discharge, since they comprehend for-

tune, life, and honor. Know that, in my anguish of mind, when besieged by the Welsh in my castle of the Garde Doloureuse, I vowed to the Virgin that, my honor safe, I would place myself at the disposal of him whom Our Lady should employ as her instrument to relieve me from yonder hour of agony. In giving me a deliverer, she gave me a master; nor could I desire a more noble one than Hugo de Lacy."

"God forbid, lady," said the Constable, speaking eagerly, as if he was afraid his resolution should fail him ere he could get the renunciation uttered, "that I should, by such a tie, to which you subjected yourself in the extremity of your distress, bind you to any resolution in my favor which can put force on your own inclinations!"

The abbess herself could not help expressing her applause of this sentiment, declaring it was spoken like a Norman gentleman; but, at the same time, her eyes, turned towards her niece, seemed to exhort her to beware how she declined to profit by the candor of De Lacy.

But Eveline proceeded, with her eyes fixed on the ground, and a slight color overspreading her face, to state her own sentiments, without listening to the suggestions of any one. "I will own, noble sir," she said, "that, when your valor had rescued me from approaching destruction, I could have wished—honoring and respecting you, as I had done your late friend, my excellent father—that you could have accepted a daughter's service from me. I do not pretend entirely to have surmounted these sentiments, although I have combated them, as being unworthy of me and ungrateful to you. But, from the moment you were pleased to honor me by a claim on this poor hand, I have studiously examined my sentiments towards you, and taught myself so far to make them coincide with my duty, that I may call myself assured that De Lacy would not find in Eveline Berenger an indifferent, far less an unworthy, bride. In this, sir, you may boldly confide, whether the union you have sought for takes place instantly or is delayed till a longer season. Still farther, I must acknowledge that the postponement of these nuptials will be more agreeable to me than their immediate accomplishment. I am at present very young, and totally inexperienced. Two or three years will, I trust, render me yet more worthy the regard of a man of honor."

At this declaration in his favor, however cold and qualified, De Lacy had as much difficulty to restrain his transports as formerly to moderate his agitation.

"Angel of bounty and of kindness!" he said, kneeling once more, and again possessing himself of her hand, "perhaps I ought in honor to resign voluntarily those hopes which you decline to ravish from me forcibly. But who could be capable of such unrelenting magnanimity? Let me hope that my devoted attachment, that which you shall hear of me when at a distance, that which you shall know of me when near you, may give to your sentiments a more tender warmth than they now express; and, in the meanwhile, blame me not that I accept your plighted faith anew, under the conditions which you attach to it. I am conscious my wooing has been too late in life to expect the animated returns proper to youthful passion. Blame me not if I remain satisfied with those calmer sentiments which make life happy, though they cannot make passion rapturous. Your hand remains in my grasp, but it acknowledges not my pressure. Can it be that it refuses to ratify what your lips have said?"

"Never, noble De Lacy!" said Eveline, with more animation than she had yet expressed; and it appeared that the tone was at length sufficiently encouraging, since her lover was emboldened to take the lips themselves for guarantee.

It was with an air of pride, mingled with respect, that, after having received this pledge of fidelity, he turned to conciliate and to appease the offended abbess. "I trust, venerable mother," he said, "that you will resume your former kind thoughts of me, which I am aware were only interrupted by your tender anxiety for the interest of her who should be dearest to us both. Let me hope that I may leave this fair flower under the protection of the honored lady who is her next in blood, happy and secure as she must ever be while listening to your counsels and residing within these sacred walls."

But the abbess was too deeply displeased to be propitiated by a compliment which perhaps it had been better policy to have delayed till a calmer season. "My lord," she said, "and you, fair kinswoman, you ought needs to be aware how little my counsels, not frequentty given where they are unwillingly listened to, can be of avail to those embarked in worldly affairs. I am a woman dedicated to religion, to solitude, and seclusion—to the service, in brief, of Our Lady and St. Benedict. I have been already censured by my superior because I have, for love of you, fair niece, mixed more deeply in secular affairs than became the head of a convent of recluses. I will merit no farther blame on such

an account, nor can you expect it of me. My brother's daughter, unfettered by worldly ties, had been the welcome sharer of my poor solitude. But this house is too mean for the residence of the vowed bride of a mighty baron; nor do I, in my lowliness and inexperience, feel fitness to exercise over such a one that authority which must belong to me over every one whom this roof protects. The grave tenor of our devotions, and the serener contemplation to which the females of this house are devoted," continued the abbess, with increasing heat and vehemence, "shall not, for the sake of my worldly connections, be disturbed by the intrusion of one whose thoughts must needs be on the worldly toys of love and marriage."

"I do indeed believe, reverend mother," said the Constable, in his turn giving way to displeasure, "that a richly-dowered maiden, unwedded, and unlikely to wed, were a fitter and more welcome inmate to the convent than one who cannot be separated from the world, and whose wealth is not likely to increase the house's revenues."

The Constable did the abbess great injury in this hasty insinuation, and it only went to confirm her purpose of rejecting all charge of her niece during his absence. She was in truth as disinterested as haughty; and her only reason for anger against her niece was, that her advice had not been adopted without hesitation, although the matter regarded Eveline's happiness exclusively.

The ill-timed reflection of the Constable confirmed her in the resolution which she had already, and hastily, adopted. "May Heaven forgive you, sir knight," she replied, "your injurious thoughts of His servants! It is indeed time, for your soul's sake, that you do penance in the Holy Land, having such rash judgments to repent of. For you, my niece, you cannot want that hospitality which, without verifying, or seeming to verify, unjust suspicions, I cannot now grant to you, while you have, in your kinswoman of Baldringham, a secular relation, whose nearness of blood approaches mine, and who may open her gates to you without incurring the unworthy censure that she means to enrich herself at your cost."

The Constable saw the deadly paleness which came over Eveline's cheek at this proposal, and, without knowing the cause of her repugnance, he hastened to relieve her from the apprehensions which she seemed evidently to entertain. "No, reverend mother," he said; "since *you* so harshly reject the care of your kinswoman, she shall not be a burden

to any of her other relatives. While Hugo de Lacy hath six gallant castles, and many a manor besides, to maintain fire upon their hearths, his betrothed bride shall burden no one with her society who may regard it as otherwise than a great honor; and methinks I were much poorer than Heaven hath made me, could I not furnish friends and followers sufficient to serve, obey, and protect her."

"No, my lord," said Eveline, recovering from the dejection into which she had been thrown by the unkindness of her relative; "since some unhappy destiny separates me from the protection of my father's sister, to whom I could so securely have resigned myself, I will neither apply for shelter to any more distant relation nor accept of that which you, my lord, so generously offer; since my doing so might excite harsh, and, I am sure, undeserved, reproaches against her by whom I was driven to choose a less advisable dwelling-place. I have made my resolution. I have, it is true, only one friend left, but she is a powerful one, and is able to protect me against the particular evil fate which seems to follow me, as well as against the ordinary evils of human life."

"The queen, I suppose?" said the abbess, interrupting her impatiently.

"The Queen of Heaven! venerable kinswoman," answered Eveline—"our Lady of the Garde Doloureuse, ever gracious to our house, and so lately my especial guardian and protectress. Methinks, since the vowed votaress of the Virgin rejects me, it is to her holy patroness whom I ought to apply for succor."

The venerable dame, taken somewhat at unawares by this answer, pronounced the interjection, "Umph!" in a tone better befitting a Lollard or an Iconoclast than a Catholic abbess, and a daughter of the house of Berenger. Truth is, the lady abbess's hereditary devotion to the Lady of the Garde Doloureuse was much decayed since she had known the full merits of another gifted image, the property of her own convent.

Recollecting herself, however, she remained silent, while the Constable alleged the vicinity of the Welsh, as what might possibly again render the abode of his betrothed bride at the Garde Doloureuse as perilous as she had on a former occasion found it. To this Eveline replied, by reminding him of the great strength of her native fortress, the various sieges which it had withstood, and the important circumstances, that, upon the late occasion, it was only endangered because, in compliance with a point of honor, her father

Raymond had sallied out with the garrison, and fought at disadvantage a battle under the walls. She farther suggested, that it was easy for the Constable to name, from among his own vassals or hers, a seneschal of such approved prudence and valor as might ensure the safety of the place and of its lady.

Ere De Lacy could reply to her arguments, the abbess rose, and, pleading her total inability to give counsel in secular affairs, and the rules of her order, which called her, as she said, with a heightened color and raised voice, "to the simple and peaceful discharge of her conventual duties," she left the betrothed parties in the locutory, or parlor, without any company save Rose, who prudently remained at some distance.

The issue of their private conference seemed agreeable to both; and when Eveline told Rose that they were to return presently to the Garde Doloureuse, under a sufficient escort, and were to remain there during the period of the Crusade, it was in a tone of heartfelt satisfaction which her follower had not heard her make use of for many days. She spoke also highly in praise of the kind acquiescence of the Constable in her wishes, and of his whole conduct with a warmth of gratitude approaching to a more tender feeling.

"And yet, my dearest lady," said Rose, "if you will speak unfeignedly, you must, I am convinced, allow, that you look upon this interval of years interposed betwixt your contract and your marriage rather as a respite than in any other light."

"I confess it," said Eveline, "nor have I concealed from my future lord that such are my feelings, ungracious as they may seem. But it is my youth, Rose—my extreme youth, which makes me fear the duties of De Lacy's wife. Then those evil auguries hang strangely about me. Devoted to evil by one kinswoman, expelled almost from the roof of another, I seem to myself, at present, a creature who must carry distress with her, pass where she will. This evil hour, and, what is more, the apprehensions of it, will give way to time. When I shall have attained the age of twenty, Rose, I shall be a full-grown woman, with all the soul of a Berenger strong within me, to overcome those doubts and tremors which agitate the girl of seventeen."

"Ah! my sweet mistress," answered Rose, "may God and Our Lady of the Garde Doloureuse guide all for the best! But I would that this contract had not taken place, or, having taken place, that it could have been fulfilled by your immediate union."

CHAPTER XX

The king called down his merry-men all,
By one, and by two, and three;
Earl Marshal was wont to be the foremost man,
But the hindmost man was he.

Old Ballad.

If the Lady Eveline retired satisfied and pleased from her private interview with De Lacy, the joy on the part of the Constable arose to a higher pitch of rapture than he was in the habit of feeling or expressing; and it was augmented by a visit of the leeches who attended his nephew, from whom he received a minute and particular account of his present disorder, with every assurance of a speedy recovery.

The Constable caused alms to be distributed to the convents and to the poor, masses to be said, and tapers to be lighted. He visited the Archbishop, and received from him his full approbation of the course which he proposed to pursue, with the promise that, out of the plenary power which he held from the Pope, the prelate was willing, in consideration of his instant obedience, to limit his stay in the Holy Land to the term of three years, to become current from his leaving Britain, and to include the space necessary for his return to his native country. Indeed, having succeeded in the main point, the Archbishop judged it wise to concede every inferior consideration to a person of the Constable's rank and character, whose good-will to the proposed expedition was perhaps as essential to its success as his bodily presence.

In short, the Constable returned to his pavilion highly satisfied with the manner in which he had extricated himself from those difficulties which in the morning seemed almost insuperable; and when his officers assembled to disrobe him (for great feudal lords had their levees and couchees, in imitation of sovereign princes), he distributed gratuities among them, and jested and laughed in a much gayer humor than they had ever before witnessed.

"For thee," he said, turning to Vidal, the minstrel, who, sumptuously dressed, stood to pay his respects among the other attendants, "I will give thee nought at present; but

do thou remain by my bedside until I am asleep, and I will next morning reward thy minstrelsy as I like it."

"My lord," said Vidal, "I am already rewarded, both by the honor and by the liveries, which better befit a royal minstrel than one of my mean fame; but assign me a subject, and I will do my best, not out of greed of future largesses, but gratitude for past favors."

"Gramercy, good fellow," said the Constable. "Guarine," he added, addressing his squire, "let the watch be posted, and do thou remain within the tent; stretch thyself on the bear-hide, and sleep, or listen to the minstrelsy, as thou likest best. Thou thinkest thyself a judge, I have heard, of such gear."

It was usual, in those insecure times, for some faithful domestic to sleep at night within the tent of every great baron, that, if danger arose, he might not be unsupported or unprotected. Guarine accordingly drew his sword, and, taking it in his hand, stretched himself on the ground in such a manner that, on the slightest alarm, he could spring up, sword in hand. His broad black eyes, in which sleep contended with a desire to listen to the music, were fixed on Vidal, who saw them glittering in the reflection of the silver lamp, like those of a dragon or basilisk.

After a few preliminary touches on the chords of his rote, the minstrel requested of the Constable to name the subject on which he desired the exercise of his powers.

"The truth of woman," answered Hugo de Lacy, as he laid his head upon his pillow.

After a short prelude, the minstrel obeyed, by singing nearly as follows:—

Woman's faith and woman's trust—
Write the characters in dust,
Stamp them on the running stream,
Print them on the moon's pale beam,
And each evanescent letter
Shall be clearer, firmer, better,
And more permanent, I ween,
Than the thing those letters mean.

I have strain'd the spider's thread
'Gainst the promise of a maid;
I have weigh'd a grain of sand
'Gainst her plight of heart and hand;
I told my true love of the token,
How her faith proved light, and her word was broken:
Again her word and truth she plight,
And I believed them again ere night.

"How now, sir knave," said the Constable, raising himself on his elbow—"from what drunken rhymer did you learn that half-witted satire?"

"From an old, ragged, cross-grained friend of mine, called experience," answered Vidal. "I pray Heaven he may never take your lordship, or any other worthy man, under his tuition."

"Go to, fellow," said the Constable, in reply; "thou art one of those wiseacres, I warrant me, that would fain be thought witty, because thou canst make a jest of those things which wiser men hold worthy of most worship—the honor of men and the truth of women. Dost thou call thyself a minstrel, and hast no tale of female fidelity?"

"I had right many a one, noble sir, but I laid them aside when I disused my practice of the jesting part of the joyous science. Nevertheless, if it pleases your nobleness to listen, I can sing you an established lay upon such a subject."

De Lacy made a sign of acquiescence, and laid himself as if to slumber; while Vidal began one of those interminable and almost innumerable adventures concerning that paragon of true lovers, fair Ysolte, and of the constant and uninterrupted faith and affection which she displayed, in numerous situations of difficulty and peril, to her paramour, the gallant Sir Tristrem, at the expense of her less favored husband, the luckless King Mark of Cornwall, to whom, as all the world knows, Sir Tristrem was nephew.

This was not the lay of love and fidelity which De Lacy would have chosen; but a feeling like shame prevented his interrupting it, perhaps because he was unwilling to yield to or acknowledge the unpleasing sensations excited by the tenor of the tale. He soon fell asleep, or feigned to do so; and the harper, continuing for a time his monotonous chant, began at length himself to feel the influence of slumber: his words, and notes which he continued to touch upon the harp, were broken and interrupted, and seemed to escape drowsily from his fingers and voice. At length the sounds ceased entirely, and the minstrel seemed to have sunk into profound repose, with his head reclining on his breast, and one arm dropped down by his side, while the other rested on his harp. His slumber, however, was uot very long, and when he awoke from it, and cast his eyes around him, reconnoitering, by the light of the night-lamp, whatever was in the tent, he felt a heavy hand, which pressed his shoulder as if gently to solicit his attention. At the same time the voice of the vigilant Philip Guarine whispered in his ear,

"Thine office for the night is ended; depart to thine own quarters with all the silence thou mayst."

The minstrel wrapped himself in his cloak without reply, though perhaps not without feeling some resentment at a dismissal so unceremonious.

CHAPTER XXI

O! then I see Queen Mab has been with you.
Romeo and Juliet.

THE subject on which the mind has last been engaged at night is apt to occupy our thoughts even during slumber, when imagination, uncorrected by the organs of sense, weaves her own fantastic web out of whatever ideas rise at random in the sleeper. It is not surprising, therefore, that De Lacy in his dreams had some confused idea of being identified with the unlucky Mark of Cornwall; and that he awakened from such unpleasant visions with a brow more clouded than when he was preparing for his couch on the evening before. He was silent, and seemed lost in thought, while his squire assisted at his levee with the respect now only paid to sovereigns. "Guarine," at length he said, "know you the stout Fleming, who was said to have borne him so well at the seige of the Garde Doloureuse—a tall, big, brawny man?"

"Surely, my lord," answered his squire, "I know Wilkin Flammock; I saw him but yesterday."

"Indeed!" replied the Constable. "Here, meanest thou —in this city of Gloucester?"

"Assuredly, my good lord. He came hither partly about his merchandise, partly, I think, to see his daughter Rose, who is in attendance on the gracious young Lady Eveline."

"He is a stout soldier, is he not?"

"Like most of his kind—a rampart to a castle, but rubbish in the field," said the Norman squire.

"Faithful, also, is he not?" continued the Constable.

"Faithful as most Flemings, while you can pay for their faith," replied Guarine, wondering a little at the unusual interest taken in one whom he esteemed a being of an inferior order; when, after some farther inquiries, the Constable ordered the Fleming's attendance to be presently commanded.

Other business of the morning now occurred, for his speedy departure required many arrangements to be hastily adopted, when, as the Constable was giving audience to

several officers of his troops, the bulky figure of Wilkin Flammock was seen at the entrance of the pavilion, in jerkin of white cloth, and having only a knife by his side.

"Leave the tent, my masters," said De Lacy, "but continue in attendance in the neighborhood; for here comes one I must speak to in private."

The officers withdrew, and the Constable and Fleming were left alone. "You are Wilkin Flammock, who fought well against the Welsh at the Garde Doloureuse?"

"I did my best, my lord," answered Wilkin; "I was bound to it by my bargain, and I hope ever to act like a man of credit."

"Methinks," said the Constable, "that you, so stout of limb, and, as I hear, so bold in spirit, might look a little higher than this weaving trade of thine."

"No one is reluctant to mend his station, my lord," said Wilkin; "yet am I so far from complaining of mine, that I would willingly consent it should never be better, on condition I could be assured it were never worse."

"Nay, but, Flammock," said the Constable, "I mean higher things for you than your modesty apprehends: I mean to leave thee in a charge of great trust."

"Let it concern bales of drapery, my lord, and no one will perform it better," said the Fleming.

"Away! thou art too lowly-minded," said the Constable. "What think'st thou of being dubbed knight, as thy valor well deserves, and left as chatelaine of the Garde Doloureuse?"

"For the knighthood, my lord, I should crave your forgiveness; for it would sit on me like a gilded helmet on a hog. For any charge, whether of castle or cottage, I trust I might discharge it as well as another."

"I fear me thy rank must be in some way mended," said the Constable, surveying the unmilitary dress of the figure before him; "it is at present too mean to befit the protector and guardian of a young lady of high birth and rank."

"I the guardian of a young lady of birth and rank!" said Flammock, his light, large eyes turning larger, lighter, and rounder as he spoke.

"Even thou," said the Constable. "The Lady Eveline proposes to take up her residence in her castle of the Garde Doloureuse. I have been casting about to whom I may entrust the keeping of her person, as well as of the stronghold. Were I to choose some knight of name, as I have many in my household, he would be setting about to do

deeds of vassalage upon the Welsh, and engaging himself in turmoils, which would render the safety of the castle precarious; or he would be absent on feats of chivalry, tournaments, and hunting-parties; or he would, perchance, have shows of that light nature under the walls, or even within the courts of the castle, turning the secluded and quiet abode which becomes the situation of the Lady Eveline into the misrule of a dissolute revel. Thee I can confide in: thou wilt fight when it is requisite, yet wilt not provoke danger for the sake of danger itself; thy birth, thy habits will lead thee to avoid those gaieties, which, however fascinating to others, cannot but be distasteful to thee; thy management will be as regular as I will take care that it shall be honorable; and thy relation to her favorite, Rose, will render thy guardianship more agreeable to the Lady Eveline than, perchance, one of her own rank. And, to speak to thee a language which thy nation readily comprehends, the reward, Fleming, for the regular discharge of this most weighty trust shall be beyond thy most flattering hope."

The Fleming had listened to the first part of this discourse with an expression of surprise, which gradually gave way to one of deep and anxious reflection. He gazed fixedly on the earth for a minute after the Constable had ceased speaking, and then raising up his eyes suddenly, said, "It is needless to seek for roundabout excuses. This cannot be your earnest, my lord; but if it is, the scheme is naught."

"How and wherefore?" asked the Constable, with displeased surprise.

"Another man might grasp at your bounty," continued Wilkin, "and leave you to take chance of the value you were to receive for it; but I am a downright dealer, I will not take payment for service I cannot render."

"But I demand, once more, wherefore thou canst not, or rather wilt not, accept this trust?" said the Constable. "Surely, if I am willing to confer such confidence, it is well thy part to answer it."

"True, my lord," said the Fleming; "but methinks the noble Lord de Lacy should feel, and the wise Lord de Lacy should foresee, that a Flemish weaver is no fitting guardian for his plighted bride. Think her shut up in yonder solitary castle, under such respectable protection, and reflect how long the place will be solitary in this land of love and adventure! We shall have minstrels singing ballads by the

threave under our windows, and such twangling of harps as would be enough to frighten our walls from their foundations, as clerks say happened to those of Jericho. We shall have as many knights-errant around us as ever had Charlemagne or King Arthur. Mercy on me! A less matter than a fine and noble recluse immured—so will they term it—in a tower, under the guardianship of an old Flemish weaver, would bring half the chivalry in England round us, to break lances, vow vows, display love-liveries, and I know not what follies besides. Think you such gallants, with the blood flying through their veins like quicksilver, would much mind *my* bidding them begone?"

"Draw bolts, up with the drawbridge, drop portcullis," said the Constable, with a constrained smile.

"And thinks your lordship such gallants would mind these impediments? such are the very essence of the adventures which they come to seek. The Knight of the Swan would swim through the moat; he of the Eagle would fly over the walls; he of the Thunderbolt would burst open the gates."

"Ply cross-bow and mangonel," said De Lacy.

"And be besieged in form," said the Fleming, "like the Castle of Tintadgel in the old hangings, all for the love of fair lady? And then those gay dames and demoiselles, who go upon adventure from castle to castle, from tournament to tournament, with bare bosoms, flaunting plumes, poniards at their sides and javelins in their hands, chattering like magpies, and fluttering like jays, and ever and anon cooing like doves—how am I to exclude such from the Lady Eveline's privacy?"

"By keeping doors shuts, I tell thee," answered the Constable, still in the same tone of forced jocularity: "a wooden bar will be thy warrant."

"Ay, but," answered Flammock, "if the Flemish weaver say 'shut,' when the Norman young lady says 'open,' think which has best chance of being obeyed? At a word, my lord, for the matter of guardianship and such-like, I wash my hands of it: I would not undertake to be guardian to the chaste Susannah, though she lived in an enchanted castle which no living thing could approach."

"Thou holdest the language and thoughts," said De Lacy, "of a vulgar debauchee, who laughs at female constancy, because he has lived only with the most worthless of the sex. Yet thou shouldst know the contrary, having, as I know, a most virtuous daughter——"

"Whose mother was not less so," said Wilkin, breaking in upon the Constable's speech with somewhat more emotion than he usually displayed. "But law, my lord, gave me authority to govern and direct my wife, as both law and nature give me power and charge over my daughter. That which I can govern, I can be answerable for; but how to discharge me so well of a delegated trust is another question. Stay at home, my good lord," continued the honest Fleming, observing that his speech made some impression upon De Lacy: "let a fool's advice for once be of avail to change a wise man's purpose, taken, let me say, in no wise hour. Remain in your own land, rule your own vassals, and protect your own bride. You only can claim her cheerful love and ready obedience; and sure I am that, without pretending to guess what she may do if separated from you, she will, under your own eye, do the duty of a faithful and a loving spouse."

"And the Holy Sepulcher?" said the Constable, with a sigh, his heart confessing the wisdom of the advice, which circumstances prevented him from following.

"Let those who lost the Holy Sepulcher regain it, my lord," replied Flammock. "If those Latins and Greeks, as they call them, are no better men than I have heard, it signifies very little whether they or the heathen have the country that has cost Europe so much blood and treasure."

"In good faith," said the Constable, "there is sense in what thou sayest; but I caution thee to repeat it not, lest thou be taken for a heretic or a Jew. For me, my word and oath are pledged beyond retreat, and I have only to consider whom I may best name for that important station, which thy caution has—not without some shadow of reason—induced thee to decline."

"There is no man to whom your lordship can so naturally or honorably transfer such a charge," said Wilkin Flammock, "as to the kinsman near to you, and possessed of your trust; yet much better would it be were there no such trust to be reposed in any one."

"If," said the Constable, "by my near kinsman you mean Randal de Lacy, I care not if I tell you that I consider him as totally worthless, and undeserving of honorable confidence."

"Nay, I mean another," said Flammock, "nearer to you by blood, and, unless I greatly mistake, much nigher also in affection; I had in mind your lordship's nephew, Damian de Lacy."

The Constable started as if a wasp had stung him ; but instantly replied, with forced composure, "Damian was to have gone in my stead to Palestine, it now seems I must go in his ; for, since this last illness, the leeches have totally changed their minds, and consider that warmth of the climate as dangerous which they formerly decided to be salutary. But our learned doctors, like our learned priests, must ever be in the right, change their counsels as they may, and we poor laymen still in the wrong. I can, it is true, rely on Damian with the utmost confidence ; but he is young, Flammock—very young—and, in that particular, resembles but too nearly the party who might be otherwise committed to his charge."

"Then, once more, my lord," said the plain-spoken Fleming, "remain at home, and be yourself the protector of what is naturally so dear to you."

"Once more, I repeat that I cannot," answered the Constable. "The step which I have adopted as a great duty may perhaps be a great error, I only know that it is irretrievable."

"Trust your nephew, then, my lord," replied Wilkin ; "he is honest and true, and it is better trusting young lions than old wolves. He may err, perhaps, but it will not be from premeditated treachery."

"Thou art right, Flammock," said the Constable ; "and perhaps I ought to wish I had sooner asked thy counsel, blunt as it is. But let what has passed be a secret betwixt us ; and bethink thee of something that may advantage thee more than the privilege of speaking about my affairs."

"That account will be easily settled, my lord," replied Flammock ; "for my object was to ask your lordship's favor to obtain certain extensions of our privileges in yonder wild corner where we Flemings have made our retreat."

"Thou shalt have them, so they be not exorbitant," said the Constable. And the honest Fleming, among whose good qualities scrupulous delicacy was not the foremost, hastened to detail, with great minuteness, the particulars of his request or petition, long pursued in vain, but to which this interview was the means of ensuring success.

The Constable, eager to execute the resolution which he had formed, hastened to the lodging of Damian de Lacy, and, to the no small astonishment of his nephew, intimated to him his change of destination, alleging his own hurried departure, Damian's late and present illness, together with the necessary protection to be afforded to the Lady Eveline,

as reasons why his nephew must needs remain behind him—to represent him during his absence, to protect the family rights and assert the family honor of the house of De Lacy, above all, to act as the guardian of the young and beautiful bride whom his uncle and patron had been in some measure compelled to abandon for a time.

Damian yet occupied his bed while the Constable communicated this change of purpose. Perhaps he might think the circumstance fortunate, that in this position he could conceal from his uncle's observation the various emotions which he could not help feeling ; while the Constable, with the eagerness of one who is desirous of hastily finishing what he has to say on an unpleasing subject, hurried over an account of the arrangements which he had made, in order that his nephew might have the means of discharging, with sufficient effect, the important trust committed to him.

The youth listened as to a voice in a dream, which he had not the power of interrupting, though there was something within him which whispered there would be both prudence and integrity in remonstrating against his uncle's alteration of plan. Something he accordingly attempted to say, when the Constable at length paused ; but it was too feebly spoken to shake a resolution fully though hastily adopted, and explicitly announced, by one not in the use to speak before his purpose was fixed, or to alter it when it was declared.

The remonstrance of Damian, besides, if it could be termed such, was spoken in terms too contradictory to be intelligible. In one moment he professed his regret for the laurels which he had hoped to gather in Palestine, and implored his uncle not to alter his purpose, but permit him to attend his banner thither ; and in the next sentence he professed his readiness to defend the safety of Lady Eveline with the last drop of his blood. De Lacy saw nothing inconsistent in these feelings, though they were for the moment contradictory to each other. It was natural, he thought, that a young knight should be desirous to win honor—natural also that he should willingly assume a charge so honorable and important as that with which he proposed to invest him ; and therefore he thought it was no wonder that, assuming his new office willingly, the young man should yet feel regret at losing the prospect of honorable adventure, which he must abandon. He therefore only smiled in reply to the broken expostulations of his nephew ; and, having confirmed his former arrangement, left the young man to reflect at leisure on his change of destination, while he himself, in a

second visit to the Benedictine abbey, communicated the purpose which he had adopted to the abbess and to his bride-elect.

The displeasure of the former lady was in no measure abated by this communication, in which, indeed, she affected to take very little interest. She pleaded her religious duties, and her want of knowledge of secular affairs, if she should chance to mistake the usages of the world; yet she had always, she said, understood that the guardians of the young and beautiful of her own sex were chosen from the more mature of the other.

"Your own unkindness, lady," answered the Constable, "leaves me no better choice than I have made. Since the Lady Eveline's nearest friends deny her the privilege of their roof, on account of the claim with which she has honored me, I, on my side, were worse than ungrateful did I not secure for her the protection of my nearest male heir. Damian is young, but he is true and honorable; nor does the chivalry of England afford me a better choice."

Eveline seemed surprised, and even struck with consternation, at the resolution which her bridegroom thus suddenly announced; and perhaps it was fortunate that the remark of the lady abbess made the answer of the Constable necessary, and prevented him from observing that her color shifted more than once from pale to deep red.

Rose, who was not excluded from the conference, drew close up to her mistress; and, by affecting to adjust her veil, while in secret she strongly pressed her hand, gave her time and encouragement to compose her mind for a reply. It was brief and decisive, and announced with a firmness which showed that the uncertainty of the moment had passed away or been suppressed. "In case of danger," she said, "she would not fail to apply to Damian De Lacy to come to her aid, as he had once done before; but she did not apprehend any danger at present within her own secure castle of the Garde Doloureuse, where it was her purpose to dwell, attended only by her own household. She was resolved," she continued, "in consideration of her peculiar condition, to observe the strictest retirement, which she expected would not be violated even by the noble young knight who was to act as her guardian, unless some apprehension for her safety made his visit unavoidable."

The abbess acquiesced, though coldly, in a proposal which her ideas of decorum recommended; and preparations were hastily made for the Lady Eveline's return to the castle of

her father. Two interviews which intervened before her leaving the convent were in their nature painful. The first was when Damian was formally presented to her by his uncle, as the delegate to whom he had committed the charge of his own property, and, which was much dearer to him, as he affirmed, the protection of her person and interest.

Eveline scarce trusted herself with one glance; but that single look comprehended and reported to her the ravage which disease, aided by secret grief, had made on the manly form and handsome countenance of the youth before her. She received his salutation in a manner as embarrassed as that in which it was made; and, to his hesitating proffer of service, answered, that "She trusted only to be obliged to him for his good-will during the interval of his uncle's absence."

Her parting with the Constable was the next trial which she was to undergo. It was not without emotion, although she preserved her modest composure, and De Lacy his calm gravity of deportment. His voice faltered, however, when he came to announce, that "It were unjust she should be bound by the engagement which she had been graciously contented to abide under. Three years he had assigned for its term, to which space the Archbishop Baldwin had consented to shorten the period of his absence. "If I appear not when these are elapsed," he said, "let the Lady Eveline conclude that the grave holds De Lacy, and seek out for her mate some happier man. She cannot find one more grateful, though there are many who better deserve her."

On these terms they parted; and the Constable, speedily afterwards embarking, plowed the narrow seas for the shores of Flanders, where he proposed to unite his forces with the count of that rich and warlike country, who had lately taken the cross, and to proceed by the route which should be found most practicable on their destination for the Holy Land. The broad pennon, with the arms of the Lacys, streamed forward with a favorable wind from the prow of the vessel, as if pointing to the quarter of the horizon where its renown was to be augmented; and, considering the fame of the leader, and the excellence of the soldiers who followed him, a more gallant band, in proportion to their numbers, never went to avenge on the Saranens the evils endured by the Latins of Palestine.

Meanwhile Eveline, after a cold parting with the abbess, whose offended dignity had not yet forgiven the slight regard which she had paid to her opinion, resumed her journey homeward to her paternal castle, where her house-

hold was to be arranged in a manner suggested by the Constable, and approved of by herself.

The same preparations were made for her accommodation at every halting-place which she had experienced upon her journey to Gloucester, and, as before, the purveyor was invisible, although she could be at little loss to guess his name. Yet it appeared as if the character of these preparations was in some degree altered. All the realities of convenience and accommodation, with the most perfect assurances of safety, accompanied her everywhere on the route; but they were no longer mingled with that display of tender gallantry and taste which marked that the attentions were paid to a young and beautiful female. The clearest fountain-head and the most shady grove were no longer selected for the noontide repast; but the house of some franklin, or a small abbey, afforded the necessary hospitality. All seemed to be ordered with the most severe attention to rank and decorum: it seemed as if a nun of some strict order, rather than a young maiden of high quality and a rich inheritance, had been journeying through the land; and Eveline, though pleased with the delicacy which seemed thus to respect her unprotected and peculiar condition, would sometimes think it unnecessary that, by so many indirect hints, it should be forced on her recollection.

She thought it strange, also, that Damian, to whose care she had been so solemnly committed, did not even pay his respects to her on the road. Something there was which whispered to her that close and frequent intercourse might be unbecoming, even dangerous; but surely the ordinary duties of a knight and gentleman enjoined him some personal communication with the maiden under his escort, were it only to ask if her accommodations had been made to her satisfaction, or if she had any special wish which was ungratified. The only intercourse, however, which took place betwixt them was through means of Amelot, Damian de Lacy's youthful page, who came at morn and evening to receive Eveline's commands concerning their route and the hours of journey and repose.

These formalities rendered the solitude of Eveline's return less endurable; and had it not been for the society of Rose, she would have found herself under an intolerably irksome degree of constraint. She even hazarded to her attendant some remarks upon the singularity of De Lacy's conduct, who, authorized as he was by his situation, seemed yet as much afraid to approach her as if she had been a basilisk.

Rose let the first observation of his nature pass as if it had been unheard ; but when her mistress made a second remark to the same purpose, she answered, with the truth and freedom of her character, though perhaps with less of her usual prudence, "Damian de Lacy judges well, noble lady. He to whom the safe keeping of a royal treasure is entrusted should not indulge himself too often by gazing upon it."

Eveline blushed, wrapped herself closer in her veil, nor did she again during their journey mention the name of Damian de Lacy.

When the gray turrets of the Garde Doloureuse greeted her sight on the evening of the second day, and she once more beheld her father's banner floating from its highest watch-tower in honor of her apppoach, her sensations were mingled with pain ; but, upon the whole, she looked towards that ancient home as a place of refuge, where she might indulge the new train of thoughts which circumstances had opened to her, amid the same scenes which had sheltered her infancy and childhood.

She pressed forward her palfrey, to reach the ancient portal as soon as possible, bowed hastily to the well-known faces which showed themselves on all sides, but spoke to no one, until, dismounting at the chapel door, she had penetrated to the crypt, in which was preserved the miraculous painting. There, prostrate on the ground, she implored the guidance and protection of the Holy Virgin through those intricacies in which she had involved herself, by the fulfilment of the vow which she had made in her anguish before the same shrine. If the prayer was misdirected, its purport was virtuous and sincere ; nor are we disposed to doubt that it attained that Heaven towards which it was devoutly addressed.

CHAPTER XXII

The Virgin's image falls ; yet some, I ween,
Not unforgiven the suppliant knee might bend,
As to a visible power, in which might blend
All that was mix'd, and reconciled in her,
Of mother's love with maiden's purity,
Of high with low, celestial with terrene.

WORDSWORTH.

THE household of the Lady Eveline, though of an establishment becoming her present and future rank, was of a solemn and sequestered character, corresponding to her place of residence, and the privacy connected with her situation, retired as she was from the class of maidens who are yet unengaged, and yet not united with that of matrons, who enjoyed the protection of a married name. Her immediate female attendants, with whom the reader is already acquainted, constituted almost her whole society. The garrison of the castle, besides household servants, consisted of veterans of tried faith, the followers of Berenger and of De Lacy in many a bloody field, to whom the duties of watching and warding were as familiar as any of their more ordinary occupations, and whose courage, nevertheless, tempered by age and experience, was not likely to engage in any rash adventure or accidental quarrel. These men maintained a constant and watchful guard, commanded by the steward, but under the eye of Father Aldrovand, who, besides discharging his ecclesiastical functions, was at times pleased to show some sparkles of his ancient military education.

Whilst this garrison afforded security against any sudden attempt on the part of the Welsh to surprise the castle, a strong body of forces were disposed within a few miles of the Garde Doloureuse, ready, on the least alarm, to advance to defend the place against any more numerous body of invaders, who, undeterred by the fate of Gwenwyn, might have the hardihood to form a regular siege. To this band, which, under the eye of Damian de Lacy himself, was kept in constant readiness for action, could be added on occasion all the military force of the marches, comprising numerous bodies of Flemings and other foreigners, who held their establishments by military tenure.

While the fortress was thus secure from hostile violence, the life of its inmates was so unvaried and simple as might have excused youth and beauty for wishing for variety, even at the expense of some danger. The labors of the needle were only relieved by a walk round the battlements, where Eveline, as she passed arm in arm with Rose, received a military salute from each sentinel in turn, or in the courtyard, where the caps and bonnets of the domestics paid her the same respect which she received above from the pikes and javelins of the warders. Did they wish to extend their airing beyond the castle gate, it was not sufficient that doors and bridges were to be opened and lowered; there was, besides, an escort to get under arms, who, on foot or horseback, as the case might require, attended for the security of the Lady Eveline's person. Without this military attendance they could not in safety move even so far as the mills, where honest Wilkin Flammock, his warlike deeds forgotten, was occupied with his mechanical labors. But if a further disport was intended, and the Lady of the Garde Dolourreuse proposed to hunt or hawk for a few hours, her safety was not confided to a guard so feeble as the garrison of the castle could afford. It was necessary that Raoul should announce her purpose to Damian by a special messenger despatched the evening before, that there might be time before daybreak to scour, with a body of light cavalry, the region in which she intended to take her pleasure; and sentinels were placed in all suspicious places while she continued in the field. In truth, she tried, upon one or two occasions, to make an excursion without any formal annunciation of her intention; but all her purposes seemed to be known to Damian as soon as they were formed, and she was no sooner abroad than parties of archers and spearmen from his camp were seen scouring the valleys and guarding the mountain-pass, and Damian's own plume was usually beheld conspicuous among the distant soldiers.

The formality of these preparations so much allayed the pleasure derived from the sport, that Eveline seldom resorted to amusement which was attended with such bustle, and put in motion so many persons.

The day being worn out as it best might, in the evening Father Aldrovand was wont to read out of some holy legend, or from the homilies of some departed saint, such passages as he deemed fit for the hearing of his little congregation. Sometimes also he read and expounded a chapter of the Holy Scripture; but in such cases, the good man's attention

was so strangely turned to the military part of the Jewish history, that he was never able to quit the books of Judges and of Kings, together with the triumphs of Judas Maccabæus ; although the manner in which he illustrated the victories of the children of Israel was much more amusing to himself than edifying to his female audience.

Sometimes, but rarely, Rose obtained permission for a strolling minstrel to entertain an hour with his ditty of love and chivalry ; sometimes a pilgrim from a distant shrine repaid by long tales of the wonders which he had seen in other lands the hospitality which the Garde Doloureuse afforded ; and sometimes also it happened that the interest and intercession of the tiring-woman obtained admission for traveling merchants, or pedlers, who, at the risk of their lives, found profit by carrying from castle to castle the materials of rich dresses and female ornaments.

The usual visits of mendicants, of jugglers, of traveling jesters, are, not to be forgotten in this list of amusements ; and though this nation subjected him to close watch and observation, even the Welsh bard, with his huge harp strung with horse-hair, was sometimes admitted to vary the uniformity of their secluded life. But, saving such amusements, and saving also the regular attendance upon the religious duties at the chapel, it was impossible for life to glide away in more wearisome monotony than at the castle of the Garde Doloureuse. Since the death of its brave owner, to whom feasting and hospitality seemed as natural as thoughts of honor and deeds of chivalry, the gloom of a convent might be said to have enveloped the ancient mansion of Raymond Berenger, were it not that the presence of so many armed warders, stalking in solemn state on the battlements, gave it rather the aspect of a state-prison ; and the temper of the inhabitants gradually became infected by the character of their dwelling.

The spirits of Eveline in particular felt a depression which her naturally lively temper was quite inadequate to resist, and as her ruminations became graver, had caught that calm and contemplative manner which is so often united with an ardent and enthusiastical temperament. She meditated deeply upon the former accidents of her life ; nor can it be wondered that her thoughts repeatedly wandered back to the two several periods on which she had witnessed, or supposed that she had witnessed, a supernatural appearance. Then it was that it often seemed to her as if a good and evil power strove for mastery over her destiny.

Soltitude is favorable to feelings of self-importance ; and it is when alone, and occupied only with their own thoughts, that fanatics have reveries, and imagined saints lose themselves in imaginary ecstacies. With Eveline the influence of enthusiasm went not such a length, yet it seemed to her as if in the vision of the night she saw sometimes the aspect of the Lady of the Garde Doloureuse, bending upon her glances of pity, comfort and protection ; sometimes the ominous form of the Saxon castle of Baldringham, holding up the bloody hand as witness of the injuries with which she had been treated while in life, and menacing with revenge the descendant of her murderer.

On awakening from such dreams, Eveline would reflect that she was the last branch of her house—a house to which the tutelage and protection of the miraculous image, and the enmity and evil influence of the revengeful Vanda, had been peculiarly attached for ages. It seemed to her as if she were the prize for the disposal of which the benign saint and vindictive fiends were now to play their last and keenest game.

Thus thinking, and experiencing little interruption of her meditations from any external circumstance of interest and amusement, she became pensive, absent, wrapped herself up in contemplations which withdrew her attention from the conversations around her, and walked in the world of reality like one who is still in a dream. When she thought of her engagement with the Constable of Chester, it was with resignation, but without a wish, and almost without an expectation, that she would be called upon to fulfil it. She had accomplished her vow by accepting the faith of her deliverer in exchange for her own ; and although she held herself willing to redeem the pledge—nay, would scarce confess to herself the reluctance with which she thought of doing so—yet it is certain that she entertained unavowed hopes that Our Lady of the Garde Doloureuse would not be a severe creditor ; but, satisfied with the readiness she had shown to accomplish her vow, would not insist upon her claim in its full rigor. It would have been the blackest ingratitude to have wished that her gallant deliverer, whom she had so much cause to pray for, should experience any of those fatalities which in the Holy Land so often changed the laurel wreath into cypress ; but other accidents chanced, when men had been long abroad, to alter those purposes with which they had left home.

A strolling minstrel, who sought the Garde Doloureuse, had recited, for the amusement of the lady and household, the

celebrated lay of the Count of Gleichen, who, already married in his own country, laid himself under so many obligations in the East to a Saracen princess, through whose means he achieved his freedom, that he married her also. The Pope and his conclave were pleased to approve of the double wedlock in a case so extraordinary; and the good Count of Gleichen shared his nuptial bed between two wives of equal rank, and now sleeps between them under the same monument.

The commentaries of the inmates of the castle had been various and discrepant upon this legend. Father Aldrovand considered it as altogether false, and an unworthy calumny on the head of the church, in affirming his Holiness would countenance such irregularity. Old Margery, with the tender-heartedness of an ancient nurse, wept bitterly for pity during the tale, and, never questioning either the power of the Pope or the propriety of his decision, was pleased that a mode of extrication was found for a complication of love distresses which seemed almost inextricable. Dame Gillian declared it unreasonable that, since a woman was only allowed one husband, a man should, under any circumstances, be permitted to have two wives; whilst Raoul, glancing towards her a look of verjuice, pittied the deplorable idiocy of the man who could be fool enough to avail himself of such a privilege.

"Peace, all the rest of you," said the Lady Eveline; "and do you, my dear Rose, tell me your judgment upon this Count of Gleichen and his two wives."

Rose blushed, and replied, "She was not much accustomed to think of such matters; but that, in her apprehension, the wife who could be contented with but one half of her husband's affections had never deserved to engage the slightest share of them."

"Thou art partly right, Rose," said Eveline; "and methinks the European lady, when she found herself outshone by the young and beautiful foreign princess, would have best consulted her own dignity in resigning the place, and giving the Holy Father no more trouble than in annulling the marriage, as has been done in cases of more frequent occurrence."

This she said with an air of indifference, and even gaiety, which intimated to her faithful attendant with how little effort she herself could have made such a sacrifice, and served to indicate the state of her affections towards the Constable. But there was another than the Constable on

whom her thoughts turned more frequently, though involuntarily, than perhaps in prudence they should have done.

The recollections of Damian de Lacy had not been erased from Eveline's mind. They were, indeed, renewed by hearing his name so often mentioned, and by knowing that he was almost constantly in the neighborhood, with his whole attention fixed upon her convenience, interest, and safety; whilst, on the other hand, so far from waiting on her in person, he never even attempted, by a direct communication with herself, to consult her pleasure, even upon what most concerned her.

The messages conveyed by Father Aldrovand or by Rose to Amelot, Damian's page, while they gave an air of formality to their intercourse which Eveline thought unnecessary, and even unkind, yet served to fix her attention upon the connection between them, and to keep it ever present to her memory. The remark by which Rose had vindicated the distance observed by her youthful guardian sometimes arose to her recollection; and while her soul repelled with scorn the suspicion that, in any case, his presence, whether at intervals or constantly, could be prejudicial to his uncle's interest, she conjured up various arguments for giving him a frequent place in her memory. Was it not her duty to think of Damian often and kindly, as the Constable's nearest, best beloved, and most trusted relative? Was he not her former deliverer and her present guardian? And might he not be considered as an instrument specially employed by her divine patroness in rendering effectual the protection with which she had graced her in more than one emergency?

Eveline's mind mutinied against the restrictions which were laid on their intercourse, as against something which inferred suspicion and degradation, like the compelled seclusion to which she had heard the paynim infidels of the East subjected their females. Why should she see her guardian only in the benefits which he conferred upon her and the cares he took for her safety, and hear his sentiments only by the mouth of others, as if one of them had been infected with the plague, or some other fatal or infectious disorder, which might render their meeting dangerous to the other? And if they did meet occasionally, what else could be the consequence, save that the care of a brother towards a sister, of a trusty and kind guardian to the betrothed bride of his near relative and honored patron, might render the melancholy seclusion of the Garde Doloreuse more easy to be en-

dured by one so young in years, and, though dejected by present circumstances, naturally so gay in temper ?

Yet, though this train of reasoning appeared to Eveline, when tracing it in her own mind, so conclusive that she several times resolved to communicate her view of the case to Rose Flammock, it so chanced that, whenever she looked on the calm, steady blue eye of the Flemish maiden, and remembered that her unblemished faith was mixed with a sincerity and plain dealing proof against every consideration, she feared lest she might be subjected in the opinion of her attendant to suspicions from which her own mind freed her ; and her proud Norman spirit revolted at the idea of being obliged to justify herself to another, when she stood self-acquitted to her own mind. "Let things be as they are," she said, "and let us endure all the weariness of a life which might be so easily rendered more cheerful, rather than that this zealous but punctilious friend should, in the strictness and nicety of her feelings on my account, conceive me capable of encouraging an intercourse which could lead to a less worthy thought of me in the mind of the most scrupulous of man—or of womankind." But even this vacillation of opinion and resolution tended to bring the image of the handsome young Damian more frequently before the Lady Eveline's fancy than perhaps his uncle, had he known it, would altogether have approved of. In such reflections, however, she never indulged long ere a sense of the singular destiny which had hitherto attended her led her back into the more melancholy contemplations from which the buoyancy of her youthful fancy had for a short time emancipated her.

CHAPTER XXIII

Ours is the skie,
Where at what fowl we please our hawk shall flie.
RANDOLPH.

ONE bright September morning, old Raoul was busy in the mews where he kept his hawks, grumbling all the while to himself as he surveyed the condition of each bird, and blaming alternately the carelessness of the under-falconer, and the situation of the building, and the weather, and the wind, and all things around him, for the dilapidation which time and disease had made in the neglected hawking establishment of the Garde Doloureuse. While in these unpleasing meditations, he was surprised by the voice of his beloved Dame Gillian, who seldom was an early riser, and yet more rarely visited him when he was in his sphere of peculiar authority. "Raoul—Raoul! where art thou, man? Ever to seek for, when thou canst make aught of advantage for thyself or me!"

"And what want'st thou, dame?" said Raoul—"what means thy screaming worse than the sea-gull before wet weather? A murrain on thy voice! it is enough to fray every hawk from the perch."

"Hawk!" answered Dame Gillian; "it is time to be looking for hawks, when here is a cast of the bravest falcons come hither for sale that ever flew by lake, brook, or meadow!"

"Kites! like her that brings the news," said Raoul.

"No, nor kestrels like him that hears it," replied Gillian; "but brave jerfalcons, with large nares, strongly armed, and beaks short and something bluish——"

"Pshaw, with thy jargon! Where came they from?" said Raoul, interested in the tidings, but unwilling to give his wife the satisfaction of seeing that he was so.

"From the Isle of Man," replied Gillian.

"They must be good, then, though it was a woman brought tidings of them," said Raoul, smiling grimly at his own wit; then, leaving the mews, he demanded to know where this famous falcon-merchant was to be met withal.

"Why, between the barriers and the inner gate," replied Gillian, "where other men are admitted that have wares to utter. Where should he be?"

"And who let him in?" demanded the suspicious Raoul.

"Why, master steward, thou owl!" said Gillian; "he came but now to my chamber, and sent me hither to call you."

"Oh, the steward—the steward, I might have guessed as much. And he came to thy chamber, doubtless, because he could not have as easily come hither to me himself. Was it not so, sweetheart?"

"I do not know why he chose to come to me rather than to you, Raoul," said Gillian; "and if I did know, perhaps I would not tell you. Go to, miss your bargain or make your bargain, I care not which; the man will not wait for you: he has good proffers from the seneschal of Malpas and the Welsh Lord of Dinevawr."

"I come—I come," said Raoul, who felt the necessity of embracing this opportunity of improving his hawking establishment, and hastened to the gate, where he met the merchant, attended by a servant, who kept in separate cages the three falcons which he offered for sale.

The first glance satisfied Raoul that they were of the best breed in Europe, and that, if their education were in correspondence to their race, there could scarce be a more valuable addition even to a royal mews. The merchant did not fail to enlarge upon all their points of excellence—the breadth of their shoulders, the strength of their train, their full and fierce dark eyes, the boldness with which they endured the approach of strangers, and the lively spirit and vigor with which they pruned their plumes, and shook, or, as it was technically termed, roused themselves. He expatiated on the difficulty and danger with which they were obtained from the Rock of Ramsey, on which they were bred, and which was an eyrie unrivaled even on the coast of Norway.

Raoul turned apparently a deaf ear to all these commendations. "Friend merchant," said he, "I know a falcon as well as thou dost, and I will not deny that thine are fine ones; but if they be not carefully trained and reclaimed, I would rather have a goss-hawk on my perch than the fairest falcon that ever stretched wing to weather."

"I grant ye," said the merchant; "but if we agree on the price, for that is the main matter, thou shalt see the birds fly if thou wilt, and then buy them or not as thou

likest. I am no true merchant if thou ever saw'st birds beat them, whether at the mount or the stoop."

"That I call fair," said Raoul, "if the price be equally so."

"It shall be corresponding," said the hawk-merchant; "for I have brought six cass from the island, by the good favor of good King Reginald of Man, and I have sold every feather of them save these; and so, having emptied my cages and filled my purse, I desire not to be troubled longer with the residue; and if a good fellow, and a judge, as thou seemest to be, should like the hawks when he has seen them fly, he shall have the price of his own making."

"Go to," said Raoul, "we will have no blind bargains; my lady, if the hawks be suitable, is more able to pay for them than thou to give them away. Will a bezant be a conformable price for the cast?"

"A bezant, master falconer! By my faith, you are no bold bodesman; nevertheless, double your offer, and I will consider it."

"If the hawks are well reclaimed," said Raoul, "I will give you a bezant and a half; but I will see them strike a heron ere I will be so rash as deal with you."

"It is well," said the merchant, "and I had better take your offer than be longer cumbered with them; for were I to carry them into Wales, I might get paid in a worse fashion by some of their long knives. Will you to horse presently?"

"Assuredly," said Raoul; "and, though March be the fitter month for hawking at the heron, yet I will show you one of these frog-peckers for the trouble of riding the matter of a mile by the water-side."

"Content, sir falconer," said the merchant. "But are we to go alone, or is there no lord or lady in the castle who would take pleasure to see a piece of game gallantly struck? I am not afraid to show these hawks to a countess."

"My lady used to love the sport well enough," said Raoul; "but, I wot not why, she is moped and mazed ever since her father's death, and lives in her fair castle like a nun in a cloister, without disport or revelry of any kind. Nevertheless, Gillian, thou canst do something with her; good now, do a kind deed for once, and move her to come out and look on this morning's sport. The poor heart hath seen no pastime this summer."

"That I will do," quoth Gillian; "and, moreover, I will show her such a new riding-tire for the head, that no woman

born could ever look at without the wish to toss it a little in the wind."

As Gillian spoke, it appeared to her jealous-pated husband that he surprised a glance of more intelligence exchanged betwixt her and the trader than brief acquaintance seemed to warrant, even when allowance was made for the extreme frankness of Dame Gillian's disposition. He thought also that, on looking more closely at the merchant, his lineaments were not totally unknown to him; and proceeded to say to him drily, "We have met before, friend, but I cannot call to remembrance where."

"Like enough," said the merchant: "I have used this country often, and may have taken money of you in the way of trade. If I were in fitting place, I would gladly bestow a pottle of wine to our better acquaintance."

"Not so fast, friend," said the old huntsman; "ere I drink to better acquaintance with any one, I must be well pleased with what I already know of him. We will see thy hawks fly, and if their breeding match thy bragging, we may perhaps crush a cup together. And here come grooms and equerries, in faith: my lady has consented to come forth."

The opportunity of seeing this rural pastime had offered itself to Eveline, at a time when the delightful brilliancy of the day, the temperance of the air, and the joyous work of harvest, proceeding in every direction around, made the temptation to exercise almost irresistible.

As they proposed to go no farther than the side of the neighboring river, near the fatal bridge, over which a small guard of infantry was constantly maintained, Eveline dispensed with any farther escort, and, contrary to the custom of the castle, took no one in her train save Rose and Gillian, and one or two servants, who led spaniels or carried appurtenances of the chase. Raoul, the merchant, and an equerry attended her, of course, each holding a hawk on his wrist, and anxiously adjusting the mode in which they should throw them off, so as best to ascertain the extent of their powers and training.

When these important points had been adjusted, the party rode down the river, carefully looking on every side for the object of their game; but no heron was seen stalking on the usual haunts of the bird, although there was a heronry at no great distance.

Few disappointments of a small nature are more teasing than that of a sportsman who, having sat out with all means

and appliances for destruction of game, finds that there is none to be met with; because he conceives himself, with his full shooting trim and his empty game-pouch, to be subjected to the sneer of every passing rustic. The party of the Lady Eveline felt all the degradation of such disappointment.

"A fair country this," said the merchant, "where, on two miles of river, you cannot find one poor heron!"

"It is the clatter those d—d Flemings make with their water-mills and fulling-mills," said Raoul: "they destroy good sport and good company wherever they come. But were my lady willing to ride a mile or so farther to the Red Pool, I could show you a long-shanked fellow who would make your hawks cancelier till their brains were giddy."

"The Red Pool!" said Rose; "thou knowest it is more than three miles beyond the bridge, and lies up towards the hills."

"Ay—ay," said Raoul, "another Flemish freak to spoil pastime! They are not so scarce on the marches these Flemish wenches, that they should fear being hawked at by Welsh haggards."

"Raoul is right, Rose," answered Eveline: "it is absurd to be cooped up like birds in a cage, when all around us has been so uniformly quiet. I am determined to break out of bounds for once, and see sport in our old fashion, without being surrounded with armed men like prisoners of state. We will merrily to the Red Pool, wench, and kill a heron like free maids of the marches."

"Let me but tell my father, at least, to mount and follow us," said Rose; for they were now near the reestablished manufacturing-houses of the stout Fleming.

"I care not if thou dost, Rose," said Eveline; "yet credit me, girl, we will be at the Red Pool, and thus far on our way home again, ere thy father has donned his best doublet, girded on his two-handed sword, and accoutered his strong Flanderkin elephant of a horse, which he judiciously names Sloth—nay, frown not, and lose not, in justifying thy father, the time that may be better spent in calling him out."

Rose rode to the mills accordingly, when Wilkin Flammock, at the command of his liege mistress, readily hastened to get his steel cap and habergeon, and ordered half a dozen of his kinsmen and servants to get on horseback. Rose remained with him, to urge him to more despatch than his methodical disposition rendered natural to him; but, in spite of all her efforts to stimulate him, the Lady Eveline

had passed the bridge more than half an hour ere her escort was prepared to follow her.

Meanwhile, apprehensive of no evil, and riding gaily on, with the sensation of one escaped from confinement, Eveline moved forward on her lively jennet, as light as a lark ; the plumes with which Dame Gillian had decked her riding-bonnet dancing in the wind, and her attendants galloping behind her, with dogs, pouches, lines, and all other appurtenances of the royal sport of hawking. After passing the river, the wild greensward path which they pursued began to wind upward among small eminences, sometimes bare and craggy, sometimes overgrown with hazel, sloe-thorn, and other dwarf shrubs, and at length, suddenly descending, brought them to the verge of a mountain rivulet, that, like a lamb at play, leaped merrily from rock to rock, seemingly uncertain which way to run.

"This little stream was always my favorite, Dame Gillian," said Eveline, "and now methinks it leaps the lighter that it sees me again."

"Ah ! lady," said Dame Gillian, whose turn for conversation never extended in such cases beyond a few phrases of gross flattery, "many a fair knight would leap shoulder-height for leave to look on you as free as the brook may ! more especially now that you have donned that riding-cap, which, in exquisite delicacy of invention, methinks is a bow-shot before aught that I ever invented. What thinkest thou, Raoul ?"

"I think," answered her well-natured helpmate, "that women's tongues were contrived to drive all the game out of the country. Here we come near to the spot where we hope to speed, or nowhere; wherefore, pray, my sweet lady, be silent yourself, and keep your followers as much so as their natures will permit, while we steal along the bank of the pool, under the wind, with our hawk's hoods cast loose, all ready for a flight."

As he spoke, they advanced about a hundred yards up the brawling stream, until the little vale through which it flowed making a very sudden turn to one side, showed them the Red Pool, the superfluous water of which formed the rivulet itself.

This mountain-lake, or tarn, as it is called in some countries, was a deep basin of about a mile in circumference, but rather oblong than circular. On the side next to our falconers arose a ridge of rock, of a dark red hue, giving name to the pool, which, reflecting this massive and dusky barrier,

appeared to partake of its color. On the opposite side was a heathy hill, whose autumnal bloom had not yet faded from purple to russet; its surface was varied by the dark green furze and the fern, and in many places gray cliffs, or loose stones of the same color, formed a contrast to the ruddy precipice to which they lay opposed. A natural road of beautiful sand was formed by a beach, which, extending all the way around the lake, separated its waters from the precipitous rock on the one hand, and on the other from the steep and broken hill; and being nowhere less than five or six yards in breadth, and in most places greatly more, offered around its whole circuit a tempting opportunity to the rider who desired to exercise and breathe, the horse on which he was mounted. The verge of the pool on the rocky side was here and there strewed with fragments of large size, detached from the precipice above, but not in such quantity as to encumber this pleasant horse-course. Many of these rocky masses, having passed the margin of the water in their fall, lay immersed there like small islets; and placed amongst a little archipelago, the quick eye of Raoul detected the heron which they were in search of.

A moment's consultation was held to consider in what manner they should approach the sad and solitary bird, which, unconscious that itself was the object of a formidable ambuscade, stood motionless on a stone by the brink of the lake, watching for such small fish or water-reptiles as might chance to pass by its lonely station. A brief debate took place betwixt Raoul and the hawk-merchant on the best mode of starting the quarry, so as to allow Lady Eveline and her attendants the most perfect view of the flight. The facility of killing the heron at the *far jetée* or at the *jetée ferré*—that is, upon the hither or farther side of the pool—was anxiously debated in language of breathless importance, as if some great and perilous enterprise was about to be executed.

At length the arrangements were fixed, and the party began to advance towards the aquatic hermit, who, by this time aware of their approach, drew himself up to his full height, erected his long, lean neck, spread his broad fan-like wings, uttered his usual clanging cry, and, projecting his length of thin legs far behind him, rose upon the gentle breeze. It was then, with a loud whoop of encouragement, that the merchant threw off the noble hawk he bore, having first unhooded her to give her a view of the quarry.

Eager as a frigate in chase of some rich galleon, darted

the falcon towards the enemy which she had been taught to pursue; while, preparing for defense, if he should be unable to escape by flight, the heron exerted all his powers of speed to escape from an enemy so formidable. Plying his almost unequaled strength of wing, he ascended high and higher in the air, by short gyrations, that the hawk might gain no vantage-ground for pouncing on him; while his spiked beak, at the extremity of so long a neck as enabled him to strike an object at a yard's distance in every direction, possessed for any less spirited assailant all the terrors of a Moorish javelin.

Another hawk was now thrown off, and encouraged by the halloos of the falconer to join her companion. Both kept mounting, or scaling the air, as it were, by a succession of small circles, endeavoring to gain that superior height which the heron on his part was bent to preserve; and, to the exquisite delight of the spectators, the contest was continued until all three were wellnigh mingled with the fleecy clouds, from which was occasionally heard the harsh and plaintive cry of the quarry, appealing as it were to the heaven which he was approaching against the wanton cruelty of those by whom he was persecuted.

At length one of the falcons had reached a pitch from which she ventured to stoop at the heron; but so judiciously did the quarry maintain his defense, as to receive on his beak the stroke which the falcon, shooting down at full descent, had made against his right wing; so that one of his enemies, spiked through the body by his own weight, fell fluttering into the lake, very near the land, on the side farthest from the falconers, and perished there.

"There goes a gallant falcon to the fishes," said Raoul. "Merchant, thy cake is dough."

Even as he spoke, however, the remaining bird had avenged the fate of her sister; for the success which the heron met with on one side did not prevent his being assailed on the other wing; and the falcon stooping boldly, and grappling with, or, as it is called in falconry, "binding," his prey, both came tumbling down together, from a great height in the air. It was then no small object on the part of the falconers to come in as soon as possible, lest the falcon should receive hurt from the beak or talons of the heron; and the whole party, the men setting spurs and the females switching their palfreys, went off like the wind, sweeping along the fair and smooth beach betwixt the rock and the water.

Lady Eveline, far better mounted than any of her train,

her spirits elated by the sport and by the speed at which she moved, was much sooner than any of her attendants at the spot where the falcon and heron, still engaged in their mortal struggle, lay fighting upon the moss, the wing of the latter having been broken by the stoop of the former. The duty of a falconer in such a crisis was to rush in and assist the hawk, by thrusting the heron's bill into the earth and breaking his legs, and thus permitting the falcon to despatch him on easy terms.

Neither would the sex nor quality of the Lady Eveline have excused her becoming second to the falcon in this cruel manner; but, just as she had dismounted for that purpose, she was surprised to find herself seized on by a wild form, who exclaimed in Welsh that he seized her as a waif, for hawking on the demesnes of Dawfyd with the One Eye. At the same time many other Welshmen, to the number of more than a score, showed themselves from behind crags and bushes, all armed at point with the axes called Welsh hooks, long knives, darts, and bows and arrows.

Eveline screamed to her attendants for assistance, and at the same time made use of what Welsh phrases she possessed, to move the fears or excite the compassion of the outlawed mountaineers; for she doubted not that she had fallen under the power of such a party. When she found her requests were unheeded, and she perceived it was their purpose to detain her prisoner, she disdained to use farther entreaties; but demanded at their peril that they should treat her with respect, promising in that case that she would pay them a large ransom, and threatening them with the vengeance of the Lords Marchers, and particularly of Sir Damian de Lacy, if they ventured to use her otherwise.

The men seemed to understand her, and although they proceeded to tie a bandage over her eyes, and to bind her arms with her own veil, yet they observed in these acts of violence a certain delicacy and attention both to her feelings and her safety which led her to hope that her request had had some effect upon them. They secured her to the saddle of her palfrey, and led her away with them through the recesses of the hills; while she had the additional distress to hear behind her the noise of a conflict, occasioned by the fruitless efforts of her retinue to procure her rescue.

Astonishment had at first seized the hawking-party, when they saw from some distance their sport interrupted by a violent assault on their mistress. Old Raoul valiantly put

spurs to his horse, and, calling on the rest to follow him to the rescue, rode furiously towards the banditti; but, having no other arms save a hawking-pole and short sword, he and those who followed him in his meritorious but ineffectual attempt were easily foiled, and Raoul and one or two of the foremost severely beaten; the banditti exercising upon them their own poles till they were broken to splinters, but generously abstaining from the use of more dangerous weapons. The rest of the retinue, completly discouraged, dispersed to give the alarm, and the merchant and Dame Gillian remained by the lake, filling the air with shrieks of useless fear and sorrow. The outlaws, meanwhile, drawing together in a body, shot a few arrows at the fugitives, but more to alarm than to injure them, and then marched off, as if to cover their companions who had gone before with the Lady Eveline in their custody.

CHAPTER XXIV

> Four ruffians seized me yester morn—
> Alas! a maiden most forlorn!
> They choked my cries with wicked might,
> And bound me on a palfrey white.
>
> COLERIDGE.

SUCH adventures as are now only recorded in works of mere fiction were not uncommon in the feudal ages, when might was so universally superior to right; and it followed that those whose condition exposed them to frequent violence were more prompt in repelling, and more patient in enduring, it than could otherwise have been expected from their sex and age.

The Lady Eveline felt that she was a prisoner, nor was she devoid of fears concerning the purpose of this assault; but she suffered neither her alarm nor the violence with which she was hurried along to deprive her of the power of observing and reflecting. From the noise of hoofs which now increased around, she concluded that the greater part of the ruffians by whom she had been seized had betaken themselves to their horses. This she knew was consonant to the practise of the Welsh marauders, who, although the small size and slightness of their nags made them totally unfit for service in battle, availed themselves of their activity and sureness of foot to transport them with the necessary celerity to and from the scenes of their rapine, ensuring thus a rapid and unperceived approach, and a secure and speedy retreat. These animals traversed without difficulty, and beneath the load of a heavy soldier, the wild mountain-paths by which the country was intersected, and in one of which Lady Eveline Berenger concluded she was now engaged, from the manner in which her own palfrey, supported by a man on foot at either rein, seemed now to labor up some precipice, and anon to descend with still greater risk on the other side.

At one of those moments, a voice which she had not yet distinguished addressed her in the Anglo-Norman language, and asked, with apparent interest, if she sat safely on her saddle, offering at the same time to have her accouterments altered at her pleasure and convenience.

"Insult not my condition with the mention of safety," said Eveline; "you may well believe that I hold my safety altogether irreconcilable with these deeds of violence. If I or my vassals have done injury to any of the Cymry, let me know, and it shall be amended. If it is ransom which you desire, name the sum, and I will send an order to treat for it; but detain me not prisoner, for that can but injure me, and will avail you nothing."

"The Lady Eveline," answered the voice, still in a tone of courtesy inconsistent with the violence which she sustained, "will speedily find that our actions are more rough than our purposes."

"If you know who I am," said Eveline, "you cannot doubt that this atrocity will be avenged; you must know by whose banner my lands are at present protected."

"Under De Lacy's," answered the voice, with a tone of indifference. "Be it so—falcons fear not falcons."

At this moment there was a halt, and a confused murmur arose amongst those around her, who had hitherto been silent, unless when muttering to each other in Welsh, and as briefly as possible, directions which way to hold, or encouragement to use haste.

These murmurs ceased, and there was a pause of several minutes; at length Eveline again heard the voice which formerly addressed her, giving directions which she could not understand. He then spoke to herself. "You will presently see," he said, "whether I have spoken truly when I said I scorned the ties by which you are fettered. But you are at once the cause of strife and the reward of victory, your safety must be cared for as time will admit; and, strange as the mode of protection is to which we are to commit you, I trust the victor in the approaching struggle will find you uninjured."

"Do not, for the sake of the Blessed Virgin, let there be strife and bloodshed!" said Eveline; "rather unbind my eyes, and let me speak to those whose approach you dread. If friends, as it would seem to me, I will be the means of peace between you."

"I despise peace," replied the speaker. "I have not undertaken a resolute and daring adventure, to resign it as a child doth his plaything, at the first frown of fortune. Please to alight, noble lady; or rather be not offended that I thus lift you from the seat and place you on the greensward."

As he spoke, Eveline felt herself lifted from her palfrey,

and placed carefully and safely on the ground, in a sitting posture. A moment after, the same peremptory valet who had aided her to dismount disrobed her of her cap, the masterpiece of Dame Giillan, and of her upper mantle. "I must yet further require you," said the bandit leader, "to creep on hands and knees into this narrow aperture. Believe me, I regret the nature of the singular fortification to which I commit your person for safety."

Eveline crept forwards as directed, conceiving resistance to be of no avail, and thinking that compliance with the request of one who spoke like a person of consequence might find her protection against the unbridled fury of the Welsh, to whom she was obnoxious, as being the cause of Gwenwyn's death and the defeat of the Britons under the walls of the Garde Doloureuse.

She crept then forwards through a narrow and damp passage, built on either side with rough stones, and so low that she could not have entered it in any other posture. When she had proceeded about two or three yards, the passage opened into a concavity or apartment, high enough to permit her to sit at her ease, and of irregular, but narrow, dimensions. At the same time she became sensible, from the noise which she heard behind her, that the ruffians were stopping up the passage by which she had been thus introduced into the bowels of the earth. She could distinctly hear the clattering of stone with which they closed the entrance, and she became sensible that the current of fresh air which had rushed through the opening was gradually failing, and that the atmosphere of the subterranean apartment became yet more damp, earthy, and oppressive than at first.

At this moment came a distant sound from without, in which Eveline thought she could distinguish cries, blows, the trampling of horse, the oaths, shouts, and screams of the combatants, but all deadened by the rude walls of her prison into a confused, hollow murmur, conveying such intelligence to her ears as we may suppose the dead to hear from the world they have quitted.

Influenced by desperation, under circumstances so dreadful, Eveline struggled for liberty with such frantic energy that she partly effected her purpose by forcing her arms from the bonds which confined them. But this only convinced her of the impossibility to escape; for, rending off the veil which wrapped her head, she found herself in total darkness, and flinging her arms hastily around her, she discovered she

was cooped up in a subterranean cavern of very narrow dimensions. Her hands, which groped around, encountered only pieces of decayed metal, and a substance which, at another moment, would have made her shudder, being, in truth, the moldering bones of the dead. At present, not even this circumstance could add to her fears, immured as she seemed to be, to perish by a strange and subterranean death, while her friends and deliverers were probably within a few yards of her. She flung her arms wildly around in search of some avenue of escape, but every effort she made for liberating herself from the ponderous circumvallation was as ineffectual as if directed against the dome of a cathedral.

The noise by which her ears were at first assailed increased rapidly, and at one moment it seemed as if the covering of the vault under which she lay sounded repeatedly to blows, or the shock of substances which had fallen, or been thrown, against it. It was impossible that a human brain could have withstood these terrors, operating upon it so immediately; but happily this extremity lasted not long. Sounds, more hollow and dying away in distance, argued that one or other of the parties had retreated; and at length all was silent.

Eveline was now left to the undisturbed contemplation of her own disastrous situation. The fight was over, and, as circumstances led her to infer, her own friends were conquerors; for otherwise the victor would have relieved her from her place of confinement, and carried her away captive with him, as his words had menaced. But what could the success of her faithful friends and followers avail Eveline, who, pent up under a place of concealment which, whatever was its character, must have escaped their observation, was left on the field of battle, to become again the prize of the enemy, should their band venture to return, or die, in darkness and privation, a death as horrid as ever tyrant invented or martyr underwent, and which the unfortunate young lady could not even bear to think of without a prayer that her agony might at least be shortened.

In this hour of dread she recollected the poniard which she wore, and the dark thought crossed her mind that, when life became hopeless, a speedy death was at least within her reach. As her soul shuddered at so dreadful an alternative, the question suddenly occurred, might not this weapon be put to a more hallowed use, and aid her emancipation instead of abridging her sufferings?

This hope once adopted, the daughter of Raymond Berenger hastened to prove the experiment, and by repeated

efforts succeeded, though with difficulty, in changing her posture, so as to admit of her inspecting her place of confinement all around, but particularly the passage by which she had entered, and by which she now attempted again to return to the light of day. She crept to the extremity, and found it, as she expected, strongly blocked up with large stones and earth, rammed together in such a manner as nearly to extinguish all hope of escape. The work, however, had been hastily performed, and life and liberty were prizes to stimulate exertion. With her poniard she cleared away the earth and sods ; with her hands, little accustomed to such labor, she removed several stones, and advanced in her task so far as to obtain a glimmering of light, and, what was scarce less precious, a supply of purer air. But, at the same time, she had the misfortune to ascertain that, from the size and massiveness of a huge stone which closed the extremity of the passage, there was no hope that her unassisted strength could effect her extrication. Yet her condition was improved by the admission of air and light, as well as by the opportunity afforded of calling out for assistance.

Such cries, indeed, were for some time uttered in vain ; the field had probably been left to the dead and the dying, for low and indistinct groans were the only answer which she received for several minutes. At length, as she repeated her exclamation, a voice, faint as that of one just awakened from a swoon, pronounced these words in answer : "Edris of the Earthen House, dost thou call from thy tomb to the wretch who just hastens to his own ? Are the boundaries broken down which connect me with the living ? And do I already hear, with fleshly ears, the faint and screaming accents of the dead ?"

"It is no spirit who speaks," replied Eveline, overjoyed at finding she could at least communicate her existence to a living person—"no spirit, but a most unhappy maiden, Eveline Berenger by name, immured beneath this dark vault, and in danger to perish horribly, unless God send me rescue !"

"Eveline Berenger !" exclaimed he whom she addressed, in the accents of wonder. "It is impossible ! I watched her green mantle—I watched her plumy bonnet, as I saw her hurried from the field, and felt my own inability to follow to the rescue ; nor did force or exertion altogether leave me till the waving of the robe and the dancing of the feathers were lost to my eyes, and all hope of rescuing her abandoned my heart."

"Faithful vassal, or right true friend, or courteous stranger, whichsoever I may name thee," answered Eveline, "know thou hast been abused by the artifices of these Welsh banditti: the mantle and head-gear of Eveline Berenger they have indeed with them, and may have used them to mislead those true friends who, like thee, are anxious for my fate. Wherefore, brave sir, devise some succor, if thou canst, for thyself and me; since I dread that these ruffians, when they shall have escaped immediate pursuit, will return hither, like the robber to the hoard where he has deposited his stolen booty."

"Now, the Holy Virgin be praised," said the wounded man, "that I can spend the last breath of my life in thy just and honorable service! I would not before blow my bugle, lest I recalled from the pursuit to the aid of my worthless self some of those who might be effectually engaged in thy rescue; may Heaven grant that the recall may now be heard, that my eyes may yet see the Lady Eveline in safety and liberty!"

The words, though spoken in a feeble tone, breathed a spirit of enthusiasm, and were followed by the blast of a horn, faintly winded, to which no answer was made save the echoing of the dell. A sharper and louder blast was then sent forth, but sunk so suddenly that it seemed the breath of him who sounded the instrument had failed in the effort. A strange thought crossed Eveline's mind even in that moment of uncertainty and terror. "That," she said, "was the note of a De Lacy; surely you cannot be my gentle kinsman, Sir Damian?"

"I am that unhappy wretch, deserving of death for the evil care which I have taken of the treasure entrusted to me. What was my business to trust to reports and messengers? I should have worshiped the saint who was committed to my keeping with such vigilance as avarice bestows on the dross which he calls treasure. I should have rested nowhere, save at your gate; outwatched the brightest stars in the horizon; unseen and unknown myself, I should never have parted from your neighborhood; then had you not been in the present danger, and—much less important consequence—thou, Damian de Lacy, had not filled the grave of a forsworn and negligent caitiff!"

"Alas! noble Damian," said Eveline, "break not my heart by blaming yourself for an imprudence which is altogether my own. Thy succor was ever near when I intimated the least want of it; and it embitters my own mis-

fortune to know that my rashness has been the cause of your disaster. Answer me, gentle kinsman, and give me to hope that the wounds you have suffered are such as may be cured. Alas! how much of your blood have I seen spilled, and what a fate is mine, that I should ever bring distress on all for whom I would most willingly sacrifice my own happiness! But do not let us embitter the moments given us in mercy by fruitless repinings. Try what you can to stop thine ebbing blood, which is so dear to England—to Eveline—and to thine uncle."

Damian groaned as she spoke, and was silent; while, maddened with the idea that he might be perishing for want of aid, Eveline repeated her efforts to extricate herself for her kinsman's assistance, as well as her own. It was all in vain, and she had ceased the attempt in despair, and, passing from one hideous subject of terror to another, she sat listening with sharpened ear for the dying groan of Damian, when —feeling of ecstasy!—the ground was shaken with horses' feet advancing rapidly. Yet this joyful sound, if decisive of life, did not assure her of liberty. It might be the banditti of the mountains returning to seek their captive. Even then they would surely allow her leave to look upon and bind up the wounds of Damian de Lacy; for to keep him as a captive might vantage them more in many degrees than could his death. A horseman came up; Eveline invoked his assistance; and the first word she heard was an exclamation in Flemish from the faithful Wilkin Flammock, which nothing save some spectacle of the most unusual kind was ever known to compel from that phlegmatic person.

His presence, indeed, was particularly useful on this occasion; for, being informed by the Lady Eveline in what condition she was placed, and implored at the same time to look to the situation of Sir Damian de Lacy, he began, with admirable composure and some skill, to stop the wounds of the one, while his attendants collected levers, left by the Welsh as they retreated, and were soon ready to attempt the liberation of Eveline. With much caution, and under the experienced direction of Flammock, the stone was at length so much raised that the Lady Eveline was visible, to the delight of all, and especially of the faithful Rose, who, regardless of the risk of personal harm, fluttered around her mistress's place of confinement, like a bird robbed of her nestlings around the cage in which the truant urchin has imprisoned them. Precaution was necessary to remove the stone, lest falling inwards it might do the lady injury.

At length the rocky fragment was so much displaced that she could issue forth ; while her people, as in hatred of the coercion which she had sustained, ceased not to heave with bar and lever till, totally destroying the balance of the heavy mass, it turned over from the little flat on which it had been placed at the mouth of the subterranean entrance, and, acquiring force as it revolved down a steep declivity, was at length put into rapid motion, and rolled, crashed, and thundered down the hill, amid flashes of fire which it forced from the rocks, and clouds of smoke and dust, until it alighted in the channel of a brook, where it broke into several massive fragments, with a noise that might have been heard some miles off.

With garments rent and soiled through the violence she had sustained, with disheveled hair and disordered dress, faint from the stifling effect of her confinement, and exhausted by the efforts she had made to relieve herself, Eveline did not, nevertheless, waste a single minute in considering her own condition ; but, with the eagerness of a sister hastening to the assistance of her only brother, betook herself to examine the several severe wounds of Damian de Lacy, and to use proper means to stanch the blood and recall him from his swoon. We have said elsewhere that, like other ladies of the time, Eveline was not altogether unacquainted with the surgical art, and she now displayed a greater share of knowledge than she had been thought capable of exerting. There was prudence, foresight, and tenderness in every direction which she gave, and the softness of the female sex, with their officious humanity, ever ready to assist in alleviating human misery, seemed in her enhanced, and rendered dignified, by the sagacity of a strong and powerful understanding. After hearing with wonder for a minute or two the prudent and ready-witted directions of her mistress, Rose seemed at once to recollect that the patient should not be left to the exclusive care of the Lady Eveline, and joining, therefore, in the task, she rendered what assistance she could, while the attendants were employed in forming a litter, on which the wounded knight was to be conveyed to the castle of the Garde Doloureuse.

CHAPTER XXV

A merry place, 'tis said, in days of yore;
But something ails it now—the place is cursed.
WORDSWORTH.

THE place on which the skirmish had occurred, and the deliverance of the Lady Eveline had been effected, was a wild and singular spot, being a small level plain, forming a sort of stage, or resting-place, between two very rough paths, one of which winded up the rivulet from below, and another continued the ascent above. Being surrounded by hills and woods, it was a celebrated spot for finding game, and, in former days, a Welsh prince, renowned for his universal hospitality, his love of "crw" and of the chase, had erected a forest-lodge, where he used to feast his friends and followers with a profusion unexampled in Cambria.

The fancy of the bards, always captivated with magnificence, and having no objections to the peculiar species of profusion practised by this potentate, gave him the surname of Edris of the Goblets, and celebrated him in their odes in terms as high as those which exalt the heroes of the famous Hirlas horn. The subject of their praises, however, fell finally a victim to his propensities, having been stabbed to the heart in one of those scenes of confusion and drunkenness which were frequently the conclusion of his renowned banquets. Shocked at this catastrophe, the assembled Britons interred the relics of the prince on the place where he had died, within the narrow vault where Eveline had been confined, and having barricaded the entrance of the sepulcher with fragments of rock, heaped over it an immense cairn, or pile of stones, on the summit of which they put the assassin to death. Superstition guarded the spot; and for many a year this memorial of Edris remained unviolated, although the lodge had gone to ruin, and its vestiges had totally decayed.

In latter years, some prowling band of Welsh robbers had discovered the secret entrance, and opened it with the view of ransacking the tomb for arms and treasures, which were in ancient times often buried with the dead. These

marauders were disappointed, and obtained nothing by the violation of the grave of Edris excepting the knowledge of a secret place, which might be used for depositing their booty, or even as a place of retreat for one of their number in a case of emergency.

When the followers of Damian, five or six in number, explained their part of the history of the day to Wilkin Flammock, it appeared that Damian had ordered them to horse at break of day, with a more considerable body, to act, as they understood, against a party of insurgent peasants, when of a sudden he had altered his mind, and, dividing his force into small bands, employed himself and them in reconnoitering more than one mountain-pass betwixt Wales and the marches of the English country, in the neighborhood of the Garde Doloureuse.

This was an occupation so ordinary for him that it excited no particular notice. These maneuvers were frequently undertaken by the warlike marchers, for the purpose of intimidating the Welsh in general, more especially the bands of outlaws, who, independent of any regular government, infested those wild frontiers. Yet it escaped not comment that, in undertaking such service at this moment, Damian seemed to abandon that of dispersing the insurgents, which had been considered as the chief object of the day.

It was about noon when, falling in, as good fortune would have it, with one of the fugitive grooms, Damian and his immediate attendants received information of the violence committed on the Lady Eveline, and, by their perfect knowledge of the country, were able to intercept the ruffians at the Pass of Edris, as it was called, by which the Welsh rovers ordinarily returned to their strongholds in the interior. It is probable that the banditti were not aware of the small force which Damian headed in person, and at the same time knew that there would be an immediate and hot pursuit in their rear ; and these circumstances led their leader to adopt the singular expedient of hiding Eveline in the tomb, while one of their own number, dressed in her clothes, might serve as a decoy to deceive their assailants, and lead them from the spot where she was really concealed, to which it was no doubt the purpose of the banditti to return, when they had eluded their pursuers.

Accordingly, the robbers had already drawn up before the tomb for the purpose of regularly retreating, until they should find some suitable place either for making a stand, or where, if overmatched, they might, by abandoning their

horses and dispersing among the rocks, evade the attack of the Norman cavalry. Their plan had been defeated by the precipitation of Damian, who, beholding as he thought the plumes and mantle of the Lady Eveline in the rear of their party, charged them without considering either the odds of numbers or the lightness of his own armor, which, consisting only of a head-piece and a buff surcoat, offered but imperfect resistance to the Welsh knives and glaives. He was accordingly wounded severely at the onset, and would have been slain, but for the exertions of his few followers, and the fears of the Welsh that, while thus continuing the battle in front, they might be assaulted in the rear by the followers of Eveline, whom they must now suppose were all in arms and motion. They retreated, therefore, or rather fled, and the attendants of Damian were despatched after them by their fallen master, with directions to let no consideration induce them to leave off the chase until the captive Lady of the Garde Doloureuse was delivered from her ravishers.

The outlaws, secure in their knowledge of the paths and the activity of their small Welsh horses, made an orderly retreat, with the exception of two or three of their rearguard, cut down by Damian in his furious onset. They shot arrows, from time to time, at the men-at-arms, and laughed at the ineffectual efforts which these heavy-armed warriors, with their barbed horses, made to overtake them. But the scene was changed by the appearance of Wilkin Flammock, on his puissant war-horse, who was beginning to ascend the pass, leading a party consisting both of foot and horse. The fear of being intercepted caused the outlaws to have recourse to their last stratagem, and, abandoning their Welsh nags, they betook themselves to the cliffs, and, by superior activity and dexterity, baffled, generally speaking, the attempts of their pursuers on either hand. All of them, however, were not equally fortunate, for two or three fell into the hands of Flammock's party ; amongst others, the person upon whom Eveline's clothes had been placed, and who now, to the great disappointment of those who had attached themselves to his pursuit, proved to be, not the lady whom they were emulous to deliver, but a fair-haired young Welshman, whose wild looks and incoherent speech seemed to argue a disturbed imagination. This would not have saved him from immediate death, the usual doom of captives taken in such skirmishes, had not the faint blast of Damian's horn, sounding from above, recalled his own party, and summoned that of Wilkin Flammock to the spot ; while, in the con-

fusion and hurry of their obeying the signal, the pity or the contempt of his guards suffered the prisoner to escape. They had, indeed, little to learn from him, even had he been disposed to give intelligence, or capable of communicating it. All were well assured that their lady had fallen into an ambuscade, formed by Dawfyd the One-eyed, a redoubted freebooter of the period, who had ventured upon this hardy enterprise in the hope of obtaining a large ransom for the captive Eveline, and all, incensed at his extreme insolence and audacity, devoted his head and limbs to the eagles and the ravens.

These were the particulars which the followers of Flammock and of Damian learned by comparing notes with each other on the incidents of the day. As they returned by the Red Pool, they were joined by Dame Gillian, who, after many exclamations of joy at the unexpected liberation of her lady, and as many of sorrow at the unexpected disaster of Damian, proceeded to inform the men-at-arms that the merchant whose hawks had been the original cause of these adventures had been taken prisoner by two or three of the Welsh in their retreat, and that she herself and the wounded Raoul would have shared the same fate, but that they had no horse left to mount her upon, and did not consider old Raoul as worth either ransom or the trouble of killing. One had, indeed, flung a stone at him as he lay on the hillside, but happily, as his dame said, it fell something short of him. "It was but a little fellow who threw it," she said. "There was a big man amongst them; if he had tried, it's like, by Our Lady's grace, he had cast it a thought farther." So saying, the dame gathered herself up, and adjusted her dress for again mounting on horseback.

The wounded Damian was placed on a litter, hastily constructed of boughs, and, with the females, was placed in the center of the little troop, augmented by the rest of the young knight's followers, who began to rejoin his standard. The united body now marched with military order and precaution, and winded through the passes with the attention of men prepared to meet and to repel injury.

CHAPTER XXVI

> What! fair, and young, and faithful too?
> A miracle, if this be true.
>
> WALLER.

ROSE, by nature one of the most disinterested and affectionate maidens that ever breathed, was the first who, hastily considering the peculiar condition in which her lady was placed, and the marked degree of restraint which had hitherto characterized her intercourse with her youthful guardian, became anxious to know how the wounded knight was to be disposed of; and when she came to Eveline's side for the purpose of asking this important question, her resolution wellnigh failed her.

The appearance of Eveline was indeed such as might have made it almost cruelty to intrude upon her any other subject of anxious consideration than those with which her mind had been so lately assailed, and was still occupied. Her countenance was as pale as death could have made it, unless where it was specked with drops of blood; her veil, torn and disordered, was soiled with dust and with gore; her hair, wildly disheveled, fell in elf-locks on her brow and shoulders, and a single broken and ragged feather, which was all that remained of her head-gear, had been twisted among her tresses and still flowed there, as if in mockery, rather than ornament. Her eyes were fixed on the litter where Damian was deposited, and she rode close beside it, without apparently wasting a thought on anything, save the danger of him who was extended there.

Rose plainly saw that her lady was under feelings of excitation which might render it difficult for her to take a wise and prudent view of her own situation. She endeavored gradually to awaken her to a sense of it. "Dearest lady," said Rose, "will it please you to take my mantle?"

"Torment me not," answered Eveline, with some sharpness in her accent.

"Indeed, my lady," said Dame Gillian, bustling up as one who feared her functions as mistress of the robes might be interfered with—"indeed, my lady, Rose Flammock

speaks truth; and neither your kirtle nor your gown are sitting as they should do; and, to speak truth, they are but barely decent. And so, if Rose will turn herself, and put her horse out of my way," continued the tire-woman, "I will put your dress in better order in the sticking in of a bodkin than any Fleming of them all could do in twelve hours."

"I care not for my dress," replied Eveline, in the same manner as before.

"Care then for your honor—for your fame," said Rose, riding close to her mistress and whispering in her ear; "think, and that hastily, how you are to dispose of this wounded young man."

"To the castle," answered Eveline aloud, as if scorning the affectation of secrecy—"lead to the castle, and that straight as you can."

"Why not rather to his own camp, or to Malpas?" said Rose. "Dearest lady, believe, it will be for the best."

"Wherefore not—wherefore not? Wherefore not leave him on the wayside at once, to the knife of the Welshman and the teeth of the wolf? Once—twice—three times has he been my preserver. Where I go, he shall go; nor will I be in safety myself a moment sooner than I know that he is so."

Rose saw that she could make no impression on her mistress, and her own reflection told her that the wounded man's life might be endangered by a longer transportation than was absolutely necessary. An expedient occurred to her, by which she imagined this objection might be obviated; but it was necessary she should consult her father. She struck her palfrey with her riding-rod, and in a moment her diminutive, though beautiful, figure and her spirited little jennet were by the side of the gigantic Fleming and his tall black horse, and riding, as it were, in their vast shadow. "My dearest father," said Rose, "the lady intends that Sir Damian be transported to the castle, where it is like he may be a long sojourner—what think you, is that wholesome counsel?"

"Wholesome for the youth, surely, Roschen," answered the Fleming, "because he will better escape the risk of a fever."

"True; but is it wise for my lady?" continued Rose.

"Wise enough, if she deal wisely. But wherefore shouldst thou doubt her, Roschen?"

"I know not," said Rose, unwilling to breathe even to her

father the fears and doubts which she herself entertained; "but where there are evil tongues, there may be evil rehearsing. Sir Damian and my lady are both very young. Methinks it were better, dearest father, would you offer the shelter of your roof to the wounded knight, in the stead of his being carried to the castle."

"That I shall not, wench," answered the Fleming, hastily—"that I shall not, if I may help. Norman shall not cross my quiet threshold, nor Englishman neither, to mock my quiet thrift and consume my substance. Thou dost not know them, because thou art ever with thy lady, and hast her good favor; but I know them well, and the best I can get from them is 'Lazy Flanderkin,' and 'Greedy Flanderkin,' and 'Flemish sot'—I thank the saints they cannot say 'Coward Flanderkin,' since Gwenwyn's Welsh uproar."

"I had ever thought, my father," answered Rose, "that your spirit was too calm to regard these base calumnies. Bethink you we are under this lady's banner, and that she has been my loving mistress, and her father was your good lord; to the Constable, too, are you beholden for enlarged privileges. Money may pay debt, but kindness only can requite kindness; and I forebode that you will never have such an opportunity to do kindness to the houses of Berenger and De Lacy as by opening the doors of your house to this wounded knight."

"The doors of my house!" answered the Fleming—"do I know how long I may call that, or any house upon earth, my own? Alas, my daughter, we came hither to fly from the rage of the elements, but who knows how soon we may perish by the wrath of men!"

"You speak strangely, my father," said Rose. "It holds not with your solid wisdom to augur such general evil from the rash enterprise of a Welsh outlaw."

"I think not of the one-eyed robber," said Wilkin, "although the increase and audacity of such robbers as Dawfyd is no good sign of a quiet country. But thou, who livest within yonder walls, hearest but little of what passes without, and your estate is less anxious; you had known nothing of the news from me, unless in case I had found it necessary to remove to another country."

"To remove, my dearest father, from the land where your thrift and industry have gained you an honorable competency?"

"Ay, and where the hunger of wicked men, who envy me the produce of my thrift, may likely bring me to a dis-

honorable death. There have been tumults among the English rabble in more than one county, and their wrath is directed against those of our nation, as if we were Jews or heathens, and not better Christians and better men than themselves. They have, at York, Bristol, and elsewhere, sacked the houses of the Flemings, spoiled their goods, misused their families, and murdered themselves. And why, except that we have brought among them the skill and the industry which they possessed not; and because wealth, which they would never else have seen in Britain, was the reward of our art and our toil? Roschen, this evil spirit is spreading wider daily. Here we are more safe than elsewhere, because we form a colony of some numbers and strength. But I confide not in our neighbors; and hadst not thou, Rose, been in security, I would long ere this have given up all and left Britain."

"Given up all and left Britain!" The words sounded prodigious in the ears of his daughter, who knew better than any one how successful her father had been in his industry, and how unlikely one of his firm and sedate temper was to abandon known and present advantages for the dread of distant or contingent peril. At length she replied, "If such be your peril, my father, methinks your house and goods cannot have a better protection than the presence of this noble knight. Where lives the man who dare aught of violence against the house which harbors Damian De Lacy?"

"I know not that," said the Fleming, in the same composed and steady, but ominous, tone. "May Heaven forgive it me if it be sin! but I see little save folly in these Crusades, which the priesthood have preached up so successfully. Here has the Constable been absent for nearly three years, and no certain tidings of his life or death, victory or defeat. He marched from hence, as if he meant not to draw bridle or sheathe sword until the Holy Sepulcher was won from the Saracens, yet we can hear with no certainty whether even a hamlet has been taken from the Saracens. In the mean while, the people that are at home grow discontented; their lords, with the better part of their followers, are in Palestine—dead or alive we scarcely know; the people themselves are oppressed and flayed by stewards and deputies, whose yoke is neither so light nor so lightly endured as that of the actual lord. The commons, who naturally hate the knights and gentry, think it no bad time to make some head against them; ay, and there be some

of noble blood who would not care to be their leaders, that they may have their share in the spoil; for foreign expeditions and profligate habits have made many poor, and he that is poor will murder his father for money. I hate poor people, and I would the devil had every man who cannot keep himself by the work of his own hand!"

The Fleming concluded, with this characteristic imprecation, a speech which gave Rose a more frightful view of the state of England than, shut up as she was within the Garde Doloureuse, she had before had an opportunity of learning. "Surely," she said—"surely these violences of which you speak are not to be dreaded by those who live under the banner of De Lacy and of Berenger?"

"Berenger subsists but in name," answered Wilkin Flammock, "and Damian, though a brave youth, hath not his uncle's ascendency of character and authority. His men also complain that they are harassed with the duty of watching for protection of a castle in itself impregnable and sufficiently garrisoned, and that they lose all opportunity of honorable enterprise, as they call it—that is, of fight and spoil—in this inactive and inglorious manner of life. They say that Damian the beardless was a man, but that Damian with the mustachio is no better than a woman; and that age, which has darkened his upper lip, hath at the same time blenched his courage. And they say more, which were but wearisome to tell."

"Nay, but, let me know what they say—let me know it, for Heaven's sake!" answered Rose, "if it concerns, as it must concern, my dear lady."

"Even so, Roschen," answered Wilkin. "There are many among the Norman men-at-arms who talk, over their wine-cups, how that Damian de Lacy is in love with his uncle's betrothed bride; ay, and that they correspond together by art magic."

"By art magic, indeed, it must be," said Rose, smiling scornfully, "for by no earthly means do they correspond, as I, for one, can bear witness."

"To art magic, accordingly, they impute it," quoth Wilkin Flammock, "that, so soon as ever my lady stirs beyond the portal of her castle, De Lacy is in the saddle with a party of his cavalry, though they are positively certain that he has received no messenger, letter, or other ordinary notice of her purpose; nor have they ever, on such occasions, scoured the passes long ere they have seen or heard of my Lady Eveline's being abroad."

"This has not escaped me," said Rose; "and my lady has expressed herself even displeased at the accuracy which Damian displayed in procuring a knowledge of her motions, as well as at the officious punctuality with which he has attended and guarded them. To-day has, however, shown," she continued, "that his vigilance may serve a good purpose; and as they never met upon these occasions, but continued at such distance as excluded even the possibility of intercourse, methinks they might have escaped the censure of the most suspicious."

"Ay, my daughter Roschen," replied Wilkin, "but it is possible even to drive caution so far as to excite suspicion. Why, say the men-at-arms, should these two observe such constant, yet such guarded, intelligence with one another? Why should their approach be so near, and why, yet, should they never meet? If they had been merely the nephew and the uncle's bride, they must have had interviews avowedly and frankly; and, on the other hand, if they be two secret lovers, there is reason to believe that they do find their own private places of meeting, though they have art sufficient to conceal them."

"Every word that you speak, my father," replied the generous Rose, "increases the absolute necessity that you receive this wounded youth into your house. Be the evils you dread ever so great, yet may you rely upon it that they cannot be augmented by admitting him, with a few of his faithful followers."

"Not one follower," said the Fleming, hastily—"not one beef-fed knave of them, save the page that is to tend him and the doctor that is to attempt his cure."

"But I may offer the shelter of your roof to these three, at least?" answered Rose.

"Do as thou wilt—do as thou wilt," said the doating father. "By my faith, Roschen, it is well for thee thou hast sense and moderation in asking, since I am so foolishly prompt in granting. This is one of your freaks, now, of honor or generosity; but commend me to prudence and honesty. Ah! Rose—Rose, those who would do what is better than good sometimes bring about what is worse than bad! But I think I shall be quit of the trouble for the fear; and that thy mistress, who is, with reverence, something of a damsel-errant, will stand stoutly for the chivalrous privilege of lodging her knight in her own bower, and tending him in person."

The Fleming prophesied true. Rose had no sooner made

the proposal to Eveline that the wounded Damian should be left at her father's house for his recovery than her mistress briefly and positively rejected the proposal. "He has been my preserver," she said, "and if there be one being left for whom the gates of the Garde Doloureuse should of themselves fly open, it is to Damian de Lacy. Nay, damsel, look not upon me with that suspicious and yet sorrowful countenance; they that are beyond disguise, my girl, contemn suspicion. It is to God and Our Lady that I must answer, and to them my bosom lies open!"

They proceeded in silence to the castle gate, when the Lady Eveline issued her orders that her guardian, as she emphatically termed Damian, should be lodged in her father's apartment; and, with the prudence of more advanced age, she gave the necessary directions for the reception and accommodation of his followers, and the arrangements which such an accession of guests required in the fortress. All this she did with the utmost composure and presence of mind, even before she altered or arranged her own disordered dress.

Another step still remained to be taken. She hastened to the chapel of the Virgin, and prostrating herself before her divine protectress, returned thanks for her second deliverance, and implored her guidance and direction, and, through her intercession, that of Almighty God, for the disposal and regulation of her conduct. "Thou knowest," she said, "that from no confidence in my own strength have I thrust myself into danger. O make me strong where I am most weak. Let not my gratitude and my compassion be a snare to me; and while I strive to discharge the duties which thankfulness imposes on me, save me from the evil tongues of men, and save—O save me from the insidious devices of my own heart!"

She then told her rosary with devout fervor, and, retiring from the chapel to her own apartment, summoned her women to adjust her dress, and remove the external appearance of the violence to which she had been so lately subjected.

CHAPTER XXVII

Julia. Gentle sir,
You are our captive; but we'll use you so,
That you shall think your prison-joys may match
Whate'er your liberty hath known of pleasure.
Roderick. No, fairest, we have trifled here too long;
And, lingering to see your roses blossom,
I've let my laurels wither.

Old Play.

ARRAYED in garments of a mourning color, and of a fashion more matronly than perhaps altogether befitted her youth—plain to an extremity, and devoid of all ornament save her rosary—Eveline now performed the duty of waiting upon her wounded deliverer—a duty which the etiquette of the time not only permitted, but peremptorily enjoined. She was attended by Rose and Dame Gillian. Margery, whose element was a sick-chamber, had been already despatched to that of the young knight, to attend to whatever his condition might require.

Eveline entered the room with a light step, as if unwilling to disturb the patient. She paused at the door, and cast her eyes around her. It had been her father's chamber, nor had she entered it since his violent death. Around the walls hung a part of his armor and weapons, with hawking gloves, hunting-poles, and other instruments of sylvan sport. These relics brought, as it were, in living form before her the stately presence of old Sir Raymond. "Frown not, my father"—her lips formed the words, though her voice did not utter them—"frown not: Eveline will never be unworthy of thee."

Father Aldrovand and Amelot, the page of Damian, were seated by the bedside. They rose as Lady Eveline entered; and the first, who meddled a little with the healing art, said to Eveline, that "The knight had slumbered for some time, and was now about to awake."

Amelot at the same time came forward, and in a hasty and low voice begged that the chamber might be kept quiet and the spectators requested to retire. "My lord," he said, "ever since his illness at Gloucester, is apt to speak something

wildly as he awakes from sleep, and will be displeased with me should I permit any one to be near him."

Eveline accordingly caused her women and the monk to retire into the ante-room, while she herself remained standing by the door-communication which connected the apartments, and heard Damian mention her name as he turned himself painfully on his couch. "Is she safe and unharmed?" was his first question, and it was asked with an eagerness which intimated how far it preceded all other considerations. When Amelot replied in the affirmative, he sighed, as one whose bosom is relieved from some weighty load, and, in a less animated voice, asked of the page where they were. "This apartment," he said, "with its furniture, are all strange to me."

"My dear master," said Amelot, "you are at present too weak to ask questions and receive explanations."

"Be I where I will," said Damian, as if recovering his recollection, "I am not in the place where my duty calls me. Tell my trumpets to sound to horse—to horse, and let Ralph Genvil carry my banner. To horse—to horse! we have not a moment to lose."

The wounded knight made some effort to rise, which, in his state of weakness, Amelot was easily able to frustrate. "Thou art right," he said, as he sunk back into his reclining posture—"thou art right, I am weak; but why should strength remain when honor is lost?"

The unhappy young man covered his face with his hands, and groaned in agony, which seemed more that of the mind than of the body. Lady Eveline approached his bedside with unassured steps, fearing she knew not what, yet earnest to testify the interest which she felt in the distress of the sufferer. Damian looked up and beheld her, and again hid his face with his hands.

"What means this strange passion, sir knight?" said Eveline, with a voice which, at first weak and trembling, gradually obtained steadiness and composure. "Ought it to grieve you so much, sworn as you are to the duties of chivalry, that Heaven hath twice made you its instrument to save the unfortunate Eveline Berenger?"

"O no—no!" he exclaimed with rapidity; "since you are saved, all is well; but time presses—it is necessary I should presently depart—nowhere ought I now to tarry—least of all within this castle. Once more, Amelot, let them get to horse!"

"Nay, my good lord," said the damsel, "this must not

be. As your ward, I cannot let my guardian part thus suddenly; as a physician, I cannot allow my patient to destroy himself. It is impossible that you can brook the saddle."

"A litter—a bier—a cart, to drag forth the dishonored knight and traitor—all were too good for me—a coffin were best of all! But see, Amelot, that it be framed like that of the meanest churl: no spurs displayed on the pall, no shield with the ancient coat of the De Lacys, no helmet with their knightly crest must deck the hearse of him whose name is dishonored!"

"Is his brain unsettled," said Eveline, looking with terror from the wounded man to his attendant; "or is there some dreadful mystery in these broken words? If so, speak it forth; and if it may be amended by life or goods, my deliverer will sustain no wrong."

Amelot regarded her with a dejected and melancholy air, shook his head, and looked down on his master with a countenance which seemed to express that the questions which she asked could not be prudently answered in Sir Damian's presence. The Lady Eveline, observing this gesture, stepped back into the outer apartment, and made Amelot a sign to follow her. He obeyed, after a glance at his master, who remained in the same disconsolate posture as formerly, with his hands crossed over his eyes, like one who wished to exclude the light and all which the light made visible.

When Amelot was in the wardrobe, Eveline, making signs to her attendants to keep at such distance as the room permitted, questioned him closely on the cause of his master's desperate expression of sorrow and remorse. "Thou knowest," she said, "that I am bound to succor thy lord, if I may, both from gratitude, as one whom he hath served to the peril of his life, and also from kinsmanship. Tell me, therefore, in what case he stands, that I may help him if I can; that is," she added, her pale cheeks deeply coloring, "if the cause of his distress be fitting for me to hear."

The page bowed low, yet showed such embarrassment when he began to speak as produced a corresponding degree of confusion in the Lady Eveline, who, nevertheless, urged him as before "to speak without scruple or delay—so that the tenor of his discourse was fitting for her ears."

"Believe me, noble lady," said Amelot, "your commands had been instantly obeyed, but that I fear my master's displeasure if I talk of his affairs without his warrant; nevertheless, on your command, whom I know he honors above all earthly beings, I will speak thus far, that, if his life be safe

from the wounds he has received, his honor and worship may be in great danger, if it please not Heaven to send me a remedy."

"Speak on," said Eveline; "and be assured you will do Sir Damian de Lacy no prejudice by the confidence you may rest in me."

"I will believe it, lady," said the page. "Know, then, if it be not already known to you, that the clowns and rabble who have taken arms against the nobles in the west pretend to be favored in their insurrection not only by Randal Lacy, but by my master, Sir Damian."

"They lie that dare charge him with such foul treason to his own blood, as well as to his sovereign," replied Eveline.

"Well do I believe they lie," said Amelot; "but this hinders not their falsehoods from being believed by those who know him less inwardly. More than one runaway from our troop have joined this rabblement, and that gives some credit to the scandal. And then they say—they say—that—in short, that my master longs to possess the lands in his proper right which he occupies as his uncle's administrator; and that if the old Constable—I crave your pardon, madam—should return from Palestine, he should find it difficult to obtain possession of his own again."

"The sordid wretches judge of others by their own base minds, and conceive those temptations too powerful for men of worth which they are themselves conscious they would be unable to resist. But are the insurgents then so insolent and so powerful? We have heard of their violences, but only as if it had been some popular tumult."

"We had notice last night that they have drawn together in great force, and besieged or blockaded Wild Wenlock, with his men-at-arms, in a village about ten miles hence. He hath sent to my master, as his kinsman and companion-at-arms, to come to his assistance. We were on horseback this morning to march to the rescue, when——"

He paused, and seemed unwilling to proceed. Eveline caught at the word. "When ye heard of my danger?" she said. "I would ye had rather heard of my death!"

"Surely, noble lady," said the page, with his eyes fixed on the ground, "nothing but so strong a cause could have made my master halt his troop and carry the better part of them to the Welsh mountains, when his countryman's distress, and the commands of the king's lieutenant, so peremptorily demanded his presence elsewhere."

"I knew it," she said—"I knew I was born to be his de-

struction ; yet methinks this is worse than I dreamed of, when the worst was in my thoughts. I feared to occasion his death, not his loss of fame. For God's sake, young Amelot, do what thou canst, and that without loss of time ! Get thee straightway to horse, and join to thy own men as many as thou canst gather of mine. Go—ride, my brave youth—show thy master's banner, and let them see that his forces and his heart are with them, though his person be absent. Haste—haste, for the time is precious ! "

" But the safety of this castle—but your own safety ?" said the page. " God knows how willingly I would do aught to save his fame ! But I know my master's mood ; and were you to suffer by my leaving the Garde Doloureuse, even although I were to save him lands, life, and honor by my doing so, I should be more like to taste of his dagger than of his thanks or bounty."

" Go, nevertheless, dear Amelot," said she : " gather what force thou canst make, and begone."

" You spur a willing horse, madam," said the page, springing to his feet ; " and, in the condition of my master, I see nothing better than that his banner should be displayed against these churls."

" To arms, then," said Eveline, hastily—" to arms, and win thy spurs. Bring me assurance that thy master's honor is safe, and I will myself buckle them on thy heels. Here —take this blessed rosary, bind it on thy crest, and be the thought of the Virgin of the Garde Doloureuse, that never failed a votary, strong with thee in the hour of conflict."

She had scarcely ended, ere Amelot flew from her presence, and summoning together such horse as he could assemble. both of his master's and of those belonging to the castle, there were soon forty cavaliers mounted in the courtyard.

But although the page was thus far readily obeyed, yet when the soldiers heard they were to go forth on a dangerous expedition, with no more experienced general than a youth of fifteen, they showed a decided reluctance to move from the castle. The old soldiers of De Lacy said, " Damian himself was almost too youthful to command them, and had no right to delegate his authority to a mere boy ;" while the followers of Berenger said, " Their mistress might be satisfied with her deliverance of the morning, without trying farther dangerous conclusions by diminishing the garrison of her castle. The times," they said, " were stormy, and it was wisest to keep a stone roof over their heads."

The more the soldiers communicated their ideas and ap-

prehensions to each other, the stronger their disinclination to the undertaking became; and when Amelot, who, page-like, had gone to see that his own horse was accoutered and brought forth, returned to the castle-yard, he found them standing confusedly together, some mounted, some on foot, all men speaking loud, and all in a state of disorder. Ralph Genvil, a veteran whose face was seamed with many a scar, and who had long followed the trade of a soldier of fortune, stood apart from the rest, holding his horse's bridle in one hand, and in the other the banner-spear, around which the banner of De Lacy was still folded.

"What means this, Genvil?" said the page, angrily. "Why do you not mount your horse and display the banner? and what occasions all this confusion?"

"Truly, sir page," said Genvil, composedly, "I am not in my saddle, because I have some regard for this old silken rag, which I have borne to honor in my time, and I will not willingly carry it where men are unwilling to follow and defend it."

"No march—no sally—no lifting of banner to-day!" cried the soldiers, by way of burden to the bannerman's discourse.

"How now, cowards, do you mutiny?" said Amelot, laying his hand on his sword.

"Menace not me, sir boy," said Genvil, "nor shake your sword my way. I tell thee, Amelot, were my weapon to cross with yours, never flail sent abroad more chaff than I would make splinters of your hatched and gilded toasting-iron. Look you, there are gray-bearded men here that care not to be led about on any boy's humor. For me, I stand little upon that, and I care not whether one boy or another commands me. But I am the Lacy's man for the time; and I am not sure that, in marching to the aid of this Wild Wenlock, we shall do an errand the Lacy will thank us for. Why led he us not thither in the morning, when we were commanded off into the mountains?"

"You well know the cause," said the page.

"Yes, we do know the cause; or, if we do not, we can guess it," answered the bannerman, with a horse-laugh, which was echoed by several of his companions.

"I will cram the calumny down thy false throat, Genvil!" said the page; and, drawing his sword, threw himself headlong on the bannerman, without considering their great difference of strength.

Genvil was contented to foil his attack by one, and, as it

seemed, a slight, movement of his gigantic arm, with which he forced the page aside, parrying, at the same time, his blow with the standard spear.

There was another loud laugh, and Amelot, feeling all his efforts baffled, threw his sword from him, and, weeping in pride and indignation, hastened back to tell the Lady Eveline of his bad success. "All," he said, "is lost: the cowardly villains have mutinied, and will not move; and the blame of their sloth and faint-heartedness will be laid on my dear master!"

"That shall never be," said Eveline, "should I die to prevent it. Follow me, Amelot."

She hastily threw a scarlet scarf over her dark garments, and hastened down to the courtyard, followed by Gillian, assuming, as she went, various attitudes and actions, expressing astonishment and pity, and by Rose, carefully suppressing all appearance of the feelings which she really entertained.

Eveline entered the castle-court, with the kindling eye and glowing brow which her ancestors were wont to bear in danger and extremity, when their soul was arming to meet the storm, and displayed in their mien and looks high command and contempt of danger. She seemed at the moment taller than her usual size; and it was with a voice distinct and clearly heard, though not exceeding the delicacy of feminine tone, that the mutineers heard her address them. "How is this, my masters?" she said; and as she spoke, the bulky forms of the armed soldiers seemed to draw closer together, as if to escape her individual censure. It was like a group of heavy waterfowl, when they close to avoid the stoop of the slight and beautiful merlin, dreading the superiority of its nature and breeding over their own inert physical strength. "How now?" again she demanded of them; "is it a time, think ye, to mutiny, when your lord is absent, and his nephew and lieutenant lies stretched on a bed of sickness? It is thus you keep your oaths? Thus ye merit your leader's bounty? Shame on ye, craven hounds, that quail and give back the instant you lose sight of the huntsman!"

There was a pause; the soldiers looked on each other, and then again on Eveline, as if ashamed alike to hold out in their mutiny or to return to their usual discipline.

"I see how it is, my brave friends—ye lack a leader here; but stay not for that—I will guide you myself, and, woman as I am, there need not a man of you fear disgrace where a Berenger commands. Trap my palfrey with a steel saddle," she said, "and that instantly." She snatched from the

ground the page's light headpiece, and threw it over her hair, caught up his drawn sword, and went on. "Here I promise you my countenance and guidance; this gentleman," she pointed to Genvil, "shall supply my lack of military skill. He looks like a man that hath seen many a day of battle, and can well teach a young leader her devoir."

"Certes," said the old soldier, smiling in spite of himself, and shaking his head at the same time, "many a battle have I seen, but never under such a commander."

"Nevertheless," said Eveline, seeing how the eyes of the rest turned on Genvil, "you do not—cannot—will not—refuse to follow me? You do not as a soldier, for my weak voice supplies your captain's orders; you cannot as a gentleman, for a lady, a forlorn and distressed female, asks you a boon; you will not as an Englishman, for your country requires your sword, and your comrades are in danger. Unfurl your banner, then, and march."

"I would do so, upon my soul, fair lady," answered Genvil, as if preparing to unfold the banner, "and Amelot might lead us well enough, with advantage of some lessons from me, but I wot not whether you are sending us on the right road."

"Surely—surely," said Eveline, earnestly, "it must be the right road which conducts you to the relief of Wenlock and his followers, besieged by the insurgent boors."

"I know not," said Genvil, still hesitating. "Our leader here, Sir Damian de Lacy, protects the commons—men say he befriends them; and I know he quarreled with Wild Wenlock once for some petty wrong he did to the miller's wife [daughter] at Twyford. We should be finely off, when our fiery young leader is on foot again, if he should find we had been fighting against the side he favored."

"Assure yourself," said the maiden, anxiously, "the more he would protect the commons against oppression, the more he would put them down when oppressing others. Mount and ride, save Wenlock and his men; there is life and death in every moment. I will warrant, with my life and lands, that whatsoever you do will be held good service to De Lacy. Come, then, follow me."

"None surely can know Sir Damian's purpose better than you, fair damsel," answered Genvil; "nay, for that matter, you can make him change as ye list. And so I will march with the men, and we will aid Wenlock, if it is yet time, as I trust it may; for he is a rugged wolf, and when he turns to bay will cost the boors blood enough ere they sound a mort. But

do you remain within the castle, fair lady, and trust to Amelot and me. Come, sir page, assume the command, since so it must be; though, by my faith, it is pity to take the headpiece from that pretty head and the sword from that pretty hand. By St. George! to see them there is a credit to the soldier's profession."

The lady accordingly surrendered the weapons to Amelot, exhorting him in few words to forget the offense he had received, and do his devoir manfully. Meanwhile, Genvil slowly unrolled the pennon, then shook it abroad, and, without putting his foot in the stirrup, aided himself a little with resting on the spear, and threw himself into the saddle, heavily armed as he was. "We are ready now, an it like your juvenility," said he to Amelot; and then, while the page was putting the band into order, he whispered to his nearest comrade, "Methinks, instead of this old swallow's tail,* we should muster rarely under a broidered petticoat: a furbelowed petticoat has no fellow in my mind. Look you, Stephen Pontoys, I can forgive Damian now for forgetting his uncle and his own credit about this wench; for, by my faith, she is one I could have doated to death upon *par amours.* Ah! evil luck be the women's portion! they govern us at every turn, Stephen, and at every age. When they are young, they bribe us with fair looks and sugared words, sweet kisses and love tokens; and when they are of middle age, they work us to their will by presents and courtesies, red wine and red gold; and when they are old, we are fain to run their errands to get out of sight of their old leathern visages. Well, old De Lacy should have stayed at home and watched his falcon. But it is all one to us, Stephen, and we may make some vantage to-day, for these boors have plundered more than one castle."

"Ay—ay," answered Pontoys, "the boor to the booty, and the bannerman to the boor, a right pithy proverb. But, prithee, canst thou say why his pageship leads us not forward yet?"

"Pshaw!" answered Genvil, "the shake I gave him has addled his brains; or perchance he has not swallowed all his tears yet; sloth it is not, for'tis a forward cockeril for his years, wherever honor is to be won. See they now begin to move. Well, it is a singular thing this gentle blood, Stephen; for here is a child whom I but now baffled like a schooboy must lead us graybeards where we may get our heads broken, and that at the command of a light lady."

* See Knight's Pennon. Note 11.

"I warrant Sir Damian is secretary to my pretty lady," answered Stephen Pontoys, "as this springald Amelot is to Sir Damian; and so we poor men must obey and keep our mouths shut."

"But our eyes open, Stephen Pontoys; forget not that."

They were by this time out of the gates of the castle, and upon the road leading to the village, in which, as they understood by the intelligence of the morning, Wenlockwas besieged or blockaded by a greatly superior number of the insurgent commons. Amelot rode at the head of the troop, still embarrassed by the affront which he had received in presence of the soldiers, and lost in meditating how he was to eke out that deficiency of experience which on former occasions had been supplied by the counsels of the bannerman, with whom he was ashamed to seek a reconciliation. But Genvil was not of a nature absolutely sullen, though an habitual grumbler. He rode up to the page, and having made his obeisance, respectfully asked him whether it were not well that some one or two of their number pricked forward upon good horses to learn how it stood with Wenlock, and whether they should be able to come up in time to his assistance.

"Methinks, bannerman," answered Amelot, "you should take the ruling of the troop, since you know so fittingly what should be done. You may be the fitter to command, because—— But I will not upbraid you."

"Because I know so ill how to obey," replied Genvil—"that is what you would say; and, by my faith, I cannot deny but there may be some truth in it. But is it not peevish in thee to let a fair expedition be unwisely conducted, because of a foolish word or a sudden action? Come, let it be peace with us."

"With all my heart," answered Amelot; "and I will send out an advanced party upon the adventure, as thou hast advised me."

"Let it be old Stephen Pontoys and two of the Chester spears: he is as wily as an old fox, and neither hope nor fear will draw him a hairbreadth farther than judgment warrants."

Amelot, eagerly embraced the hint, and, at his command, Pontoys and two lances darted forward to reconnoiter the road before them, and inquire into the condition of those whom they were advancing to succor. "And now that we are on the old terms, sir page," said the bannerman, "tell me, if thou canst, doth not yonder fair lady love our handsome knight *par amours?*"

"It is a false calumny," said Amelot indignantly; "betrothed as she is to his uncle, I am convinced she would rather die than to have such a thought, and so would our master. I have noted this heretical belief in thee before now, Genvil, and I have prayed thee to check it. You know the thing cannot be, for you know they have scarce ever met."

"How should I know that," said Genvil, "or thou either? Watch them ever so close—much water slides past the mill that Hob Miller never wots of. They do correspond; that, at least, thou canst not deny."

"I do deny it," said Amelot, "as I deny all that can touch their honor."

"Then how, in Heaven's name, comes he by such perfect knowledge of her motions as he has displayed no longer since than the morning?"

"How should I tell?" answered the page. "There be such things, surely, as saints and good angels, and if there be one on earth deserves their protection, it is Dame Eveline Berenger."

"Well said, master counsel-keeper," replied Genvil, laughing, "but that will hardly pass on an old trooper. Saints and angels, quotha! most saint-like doings, I warrant you."

The page was about to continue his angry vindication, when Stephen Pontoys and his followers returned upon the spur. "Wenlock holds out bravely," he exclaimed, "though he is felly girded in with these boors. The large cross-bows are doing good service; and I little doubt his making his place good till we come up, if it pleases you to ride something sharply. They have assailed the barriers, and were close up to them even now, but were driven back with small success."

The party were now put in as rapid motion as might consist with order, and soon reached the top of a small eminence, beneath which lay the village where Wenlock was making his defense. The air rung with the cries and shouts of the insurgents, who, numerous as bees, and possessed of that dogged spirit of courage so peculiar to the English, thronged like ants to the barriers, and endeavored to break down the palisades, or to climb over them, in despite of the showers of stones and arrows from within, by which they suffered great loss, as well as by the swords and battle-axes of the men-at-arms, whenever they came to hand-blows.

"We are in time—we are in time," said Amelot, dropping the reins of his bridle and joyfully clapping his hands; "shake thy banner abroad, Genvil—give Wenlock and his fellows a

fair view of it. Comrades, halt—breathe your horses for a moment. Hark hither, Genvil. If we descend by yonder broad pathway into the meadow where the cattle are——"

"Bravo, my young falcon!" replied Genvil, whose love of battle, like that of the war-horse of Job, kindled at the sight of the spears and at the sound of the trumpet; we shall have then an easy field for a charge on yonder knaves."

"What a thick black cloud the villains make!" said Amelot; but we will let daylight through it with our lances. See, Genvil, the defenders hoist a signal to show they have seen us."

"A signal to us!" exclaimed Genvil. "By Heaven, it is a white flag—a signal of surrender!"

"Surrender! they cannot dream of it, when we are advancing to their succor," replied Amelot; when two or three melancholy notes from the trumpets of the besieged, with a thundering and tumultuous acclamation from the besiegers, rendered the fact indisputable.

"Down goes Wenlock's pennon," said Genvil, "and the churls enter the barricades on all points. Here has been cowardice or treachery. What is to be done?"

"Advance on them," said Amelot, "retake the place, and deliver the prisoners."

"Advance, indeed!" answered the bannerman,—"not a horse's length by my counsel; we should have every nail in our corslets counted with arrow-shot before we got down the hill in the face of such a multitude; and the place to storm afterwards—it were mere insanity."

"Yet come a little forward along with me," said the page; "perhaps we may find some path by which we could descend unperceived."

According they rode forward a little way to reconnoiter the face of the hill, the page still urging the possibility of descending it unperceived amid the confusion, when Genvil answered impatiently, "Unperceived! you are already perceived: here comes a fellow, pricking towards us as fast as his beast may trot."

As he spoke, the rider came up to them. He was a short, thickset peasant, in an ordinary frieze jacket and hose, with a blue cap on his head, which he had been scarcely able to pull over a shock head of red hair, that seemed in arms to repel the covering. The man's hands were bloody, and he carried at his saddlebow a linen bag, which was also stained with blood. "Ye be of Damian de Lacy's company, be ye not?" said this rude messenger; and, when they answered

in the affirmative, he proceeded with the same blunt courtesy, "Hob Miller of Twyford commends him to Damian de Lacy, and, knowing his purpose to amend disorders in the commonwealth, Hob Miller sends him toll of the grist which he hath grinded;" and with that he took from the bag a human head and tendered it to Amelot.

"It is Wenlock's head," said Genvil; "how his eyes stare!"

"They will stare after no more wenches now," said the boor; "I have cured him of caterwauling."

"Thou!" said Amelot, stepping back in disgust and indignation.

"Yes, I myself," replied the peasant; "I am Grand Justiciary of the Commons, for lack of a better."

"Grand hangman, thou wouldst say," replied Genvil.

"Call it what thou list," replied the peasant. "Truly, it behooves men in state to give good example. I'll bid no man do that I am not ready to do myself. It is as easy to hang a man as to say "hang him"; we will have no splitting of offices in this new world which is happily set up in Old England."

"Wretch!" said Amelot, "take back thy bloody token to them that sent thee. Hadst thou not come upon assurance, I had pinned thee to the earth with my lance. But, be assured, your cruelty shall be fearfully avenged. Come, Genvil, let us to our men; there is no farther use in abiding here."

The fellow, who had expected a very different reception, stood staring after them for a few moments, then replaced his bloody trophy in the wallet, and rode back to them who sent him.

"This comes of meddling with men's *amourettes*," said Genvil: "Sir Damian would needs brawl with Wenlock about his dealings with this miller's daughter [wife], and you see they account him a favorer to their enterprise; it will be well if others do not take up the same opinion. I wish we were rid of the trouble which such suspicions may bring upon us—ay, were it at the price of my best horse. I am like to lose him at any rate with the day's hard service, and I would it were the worst it is to cost us."

The party returned, wearied and discomforted, to the castle of the Garde Doloureuse, and not without losing several of their number by the way—some straggling owing to the weariness of their horses, and other taking the opportunity of desertion, in order to join with the bands of

insurgents and plunderers, who had now gathered together in different quarters, and were augmented by recruits from the dissolute soldiery.

Amelot, on his return to the castle, found that the state of his master was still very precarious, and that the Lady Eveline, though much exhausted, had not yet retired to rest, but was awaiting his return with impatience. He was introduced to her accordingly, and, with a heavy heart, mentioned the ineffectual event of his expedition.

"Now the saints have pity upon us!" said the Lady Eveline; "for it seems as if a plague or pest attached to me, and extended itself to all who interest themselves in my welfare. From the moment they do so, their very virtues become snares to them; and what would, in every other case, recommend them to honor is turned to destruction to the friends of Eveline Berenger."

"Fear not, fair lady," said Amelot; "there are still men enough in my master's camp to put down these disturbers of the public peace. I will but abide to receive his instructions, and will hence to-morrow, and draw out a force to restore quiet in this part of the country."

"Alas! you know not yet the worst of it," replied Eveline. "Since you went hence, we have received certain notice that, when the soldiers at Sir Damian's camp heard of the accident which he this morning met with, already discontented with the inactive life which they had of late led, and dispirited by the hurts and reported death of their leader, they have altogether broken up and dispersed their forces. Yet be of good courage, Amelot," she said; "this house is strong enough to bear out a worse tempest than any that is likely to be poured on it; and if all men desert your master in wounds and affliction, it becomes yet more the part of Eveline Berenger to shelter and protect her deliverer."

CHAPTER XXVIII

> Let our proud trumpet shake their castle wall,
> Menacing death and ruin.
>
> OTWAY.

THE evil news with which the last chapter concluded were necessarily told to Damian de Lacy, as the person whom they chiefly concerned ; and Lady Eveline herself undertook the task of communicating them, mingling what she said with tears, and again interrupting those tears to suggest topics of hope and comfort, which carried no consolation to her own bosom.

The wounded knight continued with his face turned towards her, listening to the disastrous tidings, as one who was no otherwise affected by them than as they regarded her who told the story. When she had done speaking, he continued as in a reverie, with his eyes so intently fixed upon her that she rose up with the purpose of withdrawing from looks by which she felt herself embarrassed. He hastened to speak, that he might prevent her departure. "All that you have said, fair lady," he replied, "had been enough, if told by another, to have broken my heart ; for it tells me that the power and honor of my house, so solemnly committed to my charge, have been blasted in my misfortunes. But when I look upon you, and hear your voice, I forget everything, saving that you have been rescued and are here in honor and safety. Let me therefore pray of your goodness that I may be removed from the castle which holds you, and sent elsewhere. I am in no shape worthy of your farther care, since I have no longer the swords of others at my disposal, and am totally unable for the present to draw my own."

"And if you are generous enough to think of me in your own misfortunes, noble knight," answered Eveline, "can you suppose that I forget wherefore, and in whose rescue, these wounds were incurred ? No, Damian, speak not of removal : while there is a turret of the Garde Doloureuse standing, within that turret shall you find shelter and protection. Such, I am well assured, would be the pleasure of your uncle were he here in person."

It seemed as if a sudden pang of his wound had seized upon Damian; for repeating the words, "My uncle!" he writhed himself round, and averted his face from Eveline; then again composing himself, replied, "Alas! knew my uncle how ill I have obeyed his precepts, instead of sheltering me within this house he would command me to be flung from the battlements."

"Fear not his displeasure," said Eveline, again preparing to withdraw; "but endeavor, by the composure of your spirit, to aid the healing of your wounds; when I doubt not, you will be able again to establish good order in the Constable's jurisdiction, long before his return."

She colored as she pronounced the last words, and hastily left the apartment. When she was in her own chamber, she dismissed her other attendants, and retained Rose. "What dost thou think of these things, my wise maiden and monitress?" said she.

"I would," replied Rose, "either that this young knight had never entered this castle, or that, being here, he could presently leave it, or that he could honorably remain here forever."

"What dost thou mean by remaining here forever?" said Eveline, sharply and hastily.

"Let me answer that question with another—How long has the Constable of Chester been absent from England?"

"Three years come St. Clement's day," said Eveline; "and what of that?"

"Nay, nothing; but——"

"But what? I command you to speak out."

"A few weeks will place your hand at your own disposal."

"And think you, Rose," said Eveline, rising with dignity, "that there are no bonds save those which are drawn by the scribe's pen? We know little of the Constable's adventures; but we know enough to show that his towering hopes have fallen, and his sword and courage proved too weak to change the fortunes of the Sultan Saladin. Suppose him returning some brief time hence, as we have seen so many crusaders regain their homes, poor and broken in health; suppose that he finds his lands laid waste, and his followers dispersed, by the consequence of their late misfortunes, how would it sound should he also find that his betrothed bride had wedded and endowed with her substance the nephew whom he most trusted? Dost thou think such an engagement is like a Lombard's mortgage, which must be redeemed on the very day, else forfeiture is sure to be awarded?"

"I cannot tell, madam," replied Rose; "but they that keep their covenant to the letter are, in my country, held bound to no more."

"That is a Flemish fashion, Rose," said her mistress; "but the honor of a Norman is not satisfied with an observance so limited. What! wouldst thou have my honor, my affections, my duty, all that is most valuable to a woman, depend on the same progress of the calendar which an usurer watches for the purpose of seizing on a forfeited pledge? Am I such a mere commodity, that I must belong to one man if he claims me before Michaelmas, to another if he comes afterwards? No, Rose, I did not thus interpret my engagement, sanctioned as it was by the special providence of Our Lady of the Garde Doloureuse."

"It is a feeling worthy of you, my dearest lady," answered the attendant; "yet you are so young, so beset with perils, so much exposed to calumny, that I, at least, looking forward to the time when you may have a legal companion and protector, see it as an extrication from much doubt and danger."

"Do not think of it, Rose," answered Eveline: "do not liken your mistress to those provident dames who, while one husband yet lives, though in old age or weak health, are prudently engaged in plotting for another."

"Enough, my dearest lady," said Rose; "yet not so. Permit me one word more. Since you are determined not to avail yourself of your freedom, even when the fatal period of your engagement is expired, why suffer this young man to share our solitude? He is surely well enough to be removed to some other place of security. Let us resume our former sequestered mode of life, until Providence send us some better or more certain prospects."

Eveline sighed, looked down, then, looking upwards, once more had opened her lips to express her willingness to enforce so reasonable an arrangement, but for Damian's recent wounds, and the distracted state of the country, when she was interrupted by the shrill sound of trumpets, blown before the gate of the castle; and Raoul, with anxiety on his brow, came limping to inform his lady that a knight, attended by a pursuivant-at-arms, in the royal livery, with a strong guard, was in front of the castle, and demanded admittance in the name of the king.

Eveline paused a moment ere she replied, "Not even to the king's order shall the castle of my ancestors be opened, until we are well assured of the person by whom, and the

purpose for which, it is demanded. We will ourself to the gate, and learn the meaning of this summons. My veil, Rose; and call my women. Again that trumpet sounds! Alas! it rings like a signal to death and ruin."

The prophetic apprehensions of Eveline were not false; for scarce had she reached the door of the apartment, when she was met by the page Amelot, in a state of such disordered apprehension as an *élève* of chivalry was scarce on any occasion permitted to display. "Lady—noble lady," he said, hastily bending his knee to Eveline, "save my dearest master. You, and you alone, can save him at this extremity."

"I!" said Eveline, in astonishment—"I save him! And from what danger? God knows how willingly!"

There she stopped short, as if afraid to trust herself with expressing what rose to her lips.

"Guy Monthermer, lady, is at the gate, with a pursuivant and the royal banner. The hereditary enemy of the house of Lacy, thus accompanied, comes hither for no good: the extent of the evil I know not, but for evil he comes. My master slew his nephew at the field of Malpas, and therefore——" He was here interrupted by another flourish of trumpets, which rung, as if in shrill impatience, through the vaults of the ancient fortress.

The Lady Eveline hasted to the gate, and found that the wardens, and others who attended there, were looking on each other with doubtful and alarmed countenances, which they turned upon her at her arrival, as if to seek from their mistress the comfort and the courage which they could not communicate to each other. Without the gate, mounted and in complete armor, was an elderly and stately knight, whose raised visor and beaver depressed showed a beard already grizzled. Beside him appeared the pursuivant on horseback, the royal arms embroidered on his heraldic dress of office, and all the importance of offended consequence on his countenance, which was shaded by his barret-cap and triple plume. They were attended by a body of about fifty soldiers, arranged under the guidon of England.

When the Lady Eveline appeared at the barrier, the knight, after a slight reverence, which seemed more in formal courtesy than in kindness, demanded if he saw the daughter of Raymond Berenger. "And is it," he continued, when he had received an answer in the affirmative, "before the castle of that approved and favored servant of the house of Anjou that King Henry's trumpets have thrice

sounded without obtaining an entrance for those who are honored with their sovereign's command ?"

"My condition," answered Eveline, "must excuse my caution. I am a lone maiden, residing in a frontier fortress. I may admit no one without inquiring his purpose, and being assured that his entrance consists with the safety of the place and mine own honor."

"Since you are so punctilious, lady," replied Monthermer, "know that, in the present distracted state of the country, it is his Grace the King's pleasure to place within your walls a body of men-at-arms sufficient to guard this important castle both from the insurgent peasants, who burn and slay, and from the Welsh, who, it must be expected, will, according to their wont in time of disturbance, make incursions on the frontiers. Undo your gates, then, Lady of Berenger, and suffer his Grace's forces to enter the castle."

"Sir knight," answered the lady, "this castle, like every other fortress in England, is the king's by law ; but by law also I am the keeper and defender of it, and it is the tenure by which my ancestors held these lands. I have men enough to maintain the Garde Doloureuse in my time, as my father, and my grandfather before him, defended it in theirs. The King is gracious to send me succors, but I need not the aid of hirelings ; neither do I think it safe to admit such into my castle, who may, in this lawless time, make themselves masters of it for other than its lawful mistress."

"Lady," replied the old warrior, "his Grace is not ignorant of the motives which produce a contumacy like this. It is not any apprehension for the royal forces which influences you, a royal vassal, in this refractory conduct. I might proceed upon your refusal to proclaim you a traitor to the crown, but the King remembers the services of your father. Know, then, we are not ignorant that Damian de Lacy, accused of instigating and heading this insurrection, of deserting his duty in the field, and abandoning a noble comrade to the sword of the brutal peasants, has found shelter under this roof, with little credit to your loyalty as a vassal, or your conduct as a high-born maiden. Deliver him up to us, and I will draw off these men-at-arms, and dispense, though I may scarce answer doing so, with the occupation of the castle."

"Guy de Monthermer," answered Eveline, "he that throws a stain on my name speaks falsely and unworthily ; as for Damian de Lacy, he knows how to defend his own fame. This only let me say, that, while he takes his abode in the

castle of the betrothed of his kinsman, she delivers him to no one, least of all to his well-known feudal enemy. Drop the portcullis, wardens, and let it not be raised without my special order."

The portcullis, as she spoke, fell rattling and clanging to the ground, and Monthermer, in baffled spite, remained excluded from the castle. "Unworthy lady——" he began in passion, then checking himself, said calmly to the pursuivant, "Ye are witness that she hath admitted that the traitor is within that castle; ye are witness that, lawfully summoned, this Eveline Berenger refuses to deliver him up. Do your duty, sir pursuivant, as is usual in snch cases."

The pursuivant then advanced and proclaimed, in the formal and fatal phrase befitting the occasion, that Eveline Berenger, lawfully summoned, refusing to admit the king's forces into her castle, and to deliver up the body of a false traitor, called Damian de Lacy, had herself incurred the penalty of high treason, and had involved within the same doom all who aided, abetted, or maintained her in holding out the said castle against their allegiance to Henry of Anjou. The trumpets, so soon as the voice of the herald had ceased, confirmed the doom he had pronounced by a long and ominous peal, startling from their nests the owl and the raven, who replied to it by their ill-boding screams.

The defenders of the castle looked on each other with blank and dejected countenances, while Monthermer, raising aloft his lance, exclaimed, as he turned his horse from the castle gate, "When I next approach the Garde Doloureuse, it will be not merely to intimate, but to execute, the mandate of my sovereign."

As Eveline stood pensively to behold the retreat of Monthermer and his associates, and to consider what was to be done in this emergency, she heard one of the Flemings, in a low tone, ask an Englishman who stood beside him what was the meaning of a traitor.

"One who betrayeth a trust reposed—a betrayer," said the interpreter.

The phrase which he used recalled to Eveline's memory her boding vision or dream. "Alas!" she said, "the vengeance of the fiend is about to be accomplished. Widow'd wife and wedded maid—these epithets have long been mine. Betrothed!—woe's me! it is the keystone of my destiny. Betrayer I am now denounced, though, thank God, I am clear from the guilt! It only follows that I should be betrayed, and the evil prophecy will be fulfilled to the very letter."

CHAPTER XXIX

Out on ye, owls. Nothing but songs of death?
Richard III.

MORE than three months had elapsed since the event narrated in the last chapter, and it had been the precursor of others of still greater importance, which will evolve themselves in the course of our narrative. But, as we profess to present to the reader not a precise detail of circumstances, according to their order and date, but a series of pictures, endeavoring to exhibit the most striking incident before the eye or imagination of those whom it may concern, we therefore open a new scene, and bring other actors upon the stage.

Along a wasted tract of country, more than twelve miles distant from the Garde Doloureuse, in the heat of a summer noon, which shed a burning luster on the silent valley and the blackened ruins of the cottages with which it had been once graced, two travelers walked slowly, whose palmer cloaks, pilgrims' staves, large slouched hats, with a scallop shell bound on the front of each, above all, the cross, cut in red cloth upon their shoulders, marked them as pilgrims who had accomplished their vow, and had returned from that fatal bourne from which, in those days, returned so few of the thousands who visited it, whether in the love of enterprise or in the ardor of devotion.

The pilgrims had passed, that morning, through a scene of devastation similiar to, and scarce surpassed in misery by, those which they had often trod during the wars of the Cross. They had seen hamlets which appeared to have suffered all the fury of military execution, the houses being burned to the ground; and in many cases the carcasses of the miserable inhabitants, or rather relics of such objects, were suspended on temporary gibbets, or on the trees, which had been allowed to remain standing only, it would seem, to serve the convenience of the executioners. Living creatures they saw none, excepting those wild denizens of nature who seemed silently resuming the now wasted district, from which they might have been formerly expelled by the course of civilization. Their ears were no less disagreeably occu-

pied than their eyes. The pensive travelers might indeed hear the screams of the raven, as if lamenting the decay of the carnage on which he had been gorged, and now and then the plaintive howl of some dog, deprived of his home and master; but no sounds which argued either labor or domestication of any kind.

The sable figures who, with wearied steps, as it appeared, traveled through these scenes of desolation and ravage, seemed assimilated to them in appearance. They spoke not with each other, they looked not to each other; but one, the shorter of the pair, keeping about half a pace in front of his companion, they moved slowly, as priests returning from a sinner's death-bed, or rather as specters flitting along the precincts of a churchyard.

At length they reached a grassy mound, on the top of which was placed one of those receptacles for the dead of the ancient British chiefs of distinction, called "kistvaen," which are composed of upright fragments of granite, so placed as to form a stone coffin, or something bearing that resemblance. The sepulcher had been long violated by the victorious Saxons, either in scorn or in idle curiosity, or because treasures were supposed to be sometimes concealed in such spots. The huge flat stone which had once been the cover of the coffin, if so it might be termed, lay broken in two pieces at some distance from the sepulcher, and, overgrown as the fragments were with grass and lichens, showed plainly that the lid had been removed to its present situation many years before. A stunted and doddered oak still spread its branches over the open and rude mausoleum, as if the Druids' badge and emblem, shattered and storm-broken, was still bending to offer its protection to the last remnants of their worship.

"This then, is the kistvaen," said the shorter pilgrim; "and here we must abide tidings of our scout. But what, Philip Guarine, have we to expect as an explanation of the devastation which we have traversed?"

"Some incursion of the Welsh wolves, my lord," replied Guarine; "and, by Our Lady, here lies a poor Saxon sheep whom they have snapped up."

The Constable—for he was the pilgrim who had walked foremost—turned as he heard his squire speak, and saw the corpse of a man amongst the long grass; by which, indeed, it was so hidden that he himself had passed without notice what the esquire, in less abstracted mood, had not failed to observe. The leathern doublet of the slain bespoke him an

English peasant; the body lay on its face, and the arrow which had caused his death still stuck in his back.

Philip Guarine, with the cool indifference of one accustomed to such scenes, drew the shaft from the man's back as composedly as he would have removed it from the body of a deer. With similar indifference the Constable signed to his esquire to give him the arrow, looked at it with indolent curiosity, and then said, "Thou hast forgotten thy old craft, Guarine, when thou callest that a Welsh shaft. Trust me, it flew from a Norman bow; but why it should be found in the body of that English churl, I can ill guess."

"Some runaway serf, I would warrant—some mongrel cur, who had joined the Welsh pack of hounds," answered the esquire.

"It may be so," said the Constable; "but I rather augur some civil war among the Lords Marchers themselves. The Welsh, indeed, sweep the villages, and leave nothing behind them but blood and ashes, but here even castles seem to have been stormed and taken. May God send us good news of the Garde Doloureuse!"

"Amen!" replied his squire; "but if Renault Vidal brings it, 'twill be the first time he has proved a bird of good omen."

"Philip," said the Constable, "I have already told thee thou art a jealous-pated fool. How many times has Vidal shown his faith in doubt, his address in difficulty, his courage in battle, his patience under suffering?"

"It may be all very true, my lord," replied Guarine; "yet—but what avails to speak? I own he has done you sometimes good service; but loth were I that your life or honor were at the mercy of Renault Vidal."

"In the name of all the saints, thou peevish and suspicious fool, what is it thou canst found upon to his prejudice?"

"Nothing, my lord," replied Guarine, "but instinctive suspicion and aversion. The child that, for the first time, sees a snake knows nothing of its evil properties, yet he will not chase it and take it up as he would a butterfly; such is my dislike of Vidal, I cannot help it. I could pardon the man his malicious and gloomy sidelong looks, when he thinks no one observes him; but his sneering laugh I cannot forgive: it is like the beast we heard of in Judea, who laughs, they say, before he tears and destroys."

"Philip," said De Lacy, "I am sorry for thee—sorry, from my soul, to see such a predominating and causeless

jealousy occupy the brain of a gallant old soldier. Here, in this last misfortune, to call no more ancient proofs of his fidelity, could he mean otherwise then well with us, when, thrown by shipwreck upon the coast of Wales, we would have been doomed to instant death, had the Cymry recognized in me the Constable of Chester, and in thee his trusty esquire, the executioner of his commands against the Welsh in so many instances ?"

"I acknowledge," said Philip Guarine, "death had surely been our fortune, had not that man's ingenuity represented us as pilgrims, and, under that character, acted as our interpreter; and in that character he entirely precluded us from getting information from any one respecting the state of things here, which it behoved your lordship much to know, and which I must needs say looks gloomy and suspicious enough."

"Still art thou a fool, Guarine," said the Constable; for, look you, had Vidal meant ill by us, why should he not have betrayed us to the Welsh, or suffered us, by showing such knowledge as thou and I may have of their gibberish, to betray ourselves ?"

"Well, my lord," said Guarine, "I may be silenced, but not satisfied. All the fair words he can speak, all the fine tunes he can play, Renault Vidal will be to my eyes ever a dark and suspicious man, with features always ready to mold themselves into the fittest form to attract confidence; with a tongue framed to utter the most flattering and agreeable words at one time, and at another to play shrewd plainness or blunt honesty; and an eye which, when he thinks himself unobserved, contradicts every assumed expression of features, every protestation of honesty, and every word of courtesy or cordiality to which his tongue has given utterance. But I speak not more on the subject; only I am an old mastiff, of the true breed: I love my master, but cannot endure some of those whom he favors; and yonder, as I judge, comes Vidal, to give us such an account of our situation as it shall please him."

A horseman was indeed seen advancing in the path towards the kistvaen, with a hasty pace; and his dress, in which something of the Eastern fashion was manifest, with the fantastic attire usually worn by men of his profession, made the Constable aware that the minstrel, of whom they were speaking, was rapidly approaching them.

Although Hugo de Lacy rendered his attendant no more than what in justice he supposed his services demanded,

when he vindicated him from the suspicion thrown out by Guarine, yet at the bottom of his heart he had sometimes shared those suspicions, and was often angry at himself, as a just and honest man, for censuring, on the slight testimony of looks, and sometimes casual expressions, a fidelity which seemed to be proved by many acts of zeal and integrity.

When Vidal approached and dismounted to make his obeisance, his master hasted to speak to him in words of favor, as if conscious he had been partly sharing Guarine's unjust judgment upon him, by even listening to it. "Welcome, my trusty Vidal," he said; "thou has been the raven that fed us on the mountains of Wales, be now the dove that brings us good tidings from the marches. Thou are silent. What mean these downcast looks, that embarrassed carriage, that cap plucked down o'er thine eyes? In God's name, man, speak! Fear not for me; I can bear worse than tongue of man may tell. Thou hast seen me in the wars of Palestine, when my brave followers fell, man by man, around me, and when I was left wellnigh alone, and did I blench then? Thou hast seen me when the ship's keel lay grating on the rock, and the billows flew in foam over her deck, did I blench then? No, nor will I now."

"Boast not," said the minstrel, looking fixedly upon the Constable, as the former assumed the port and countenance of one who sets Fortune and her utmost malice at defiance—"boast not, lest thy bands be made strong."

There was a pause of a minute, during which the group formed at this instant a singular picture.

Afraid to ask, yet ashamed to *seem* to fear, the ill tidings which impended, the Constable confronted his messenger with person erect, arms folded, and brow expanded with resolution; while the minstrel, carried beyond his usual and guarded apathy by the interest of the moment, bent on his master a keen fixed glance, as if to observe whether his courage was real or assumed.

Philip Guarine, on the other hand, to whom Heaven, in assigning him a rough exterior, had denied neither sense nor observation, kept his eye in turn firmly fixed on Vidal, as if endeavoring to determine what was the character of that deep interest which gleamed in the minstrel's looks apparently, and was unable to ascertain whether it was that of a faithful domestic sympathetically agitated by the bad news with which he was about to afflict his master, or that of an executioner standing with his knife suspended over his victim, deferring his blow until he should discover where it would

be more sensibly felt. In Guarine's mind, prejudiced, perhaps, by the previous opinion he had entertained, the latter sentiment so decidedly predominated, that he longed to raise his staff and strike down to the earth the servant who seemed thus to enjoy the protracted sufferings of their common master.

At length a convulsive movement crossed the brow of the Constable, and Guarine, when he beheld a sardonic smile begin to curl Vidal's lip, could keep silence no longer. "Vidal," he said, "thou art a——"

"A bearer of bad tidings," said Vidal, interrupting him, "therefore subject to the misconstruction of every fool who cannot distinguish between the author of harm and him who unwillingly reports it."

"To what purpose this delay?" said the Constable. "Come, sir minstrel, I will spare you a pang—Eveline has forsaken and forgotten me?"

The minstrel assented by a low inclination.

Hugo de Lacy paced a short turn before the stone monument, endeavoring to conquer the deep emotion which he felt. "I forgive her," he said. "Forgive, did I say? Alas! I have nothing to forgive. She used but the right I left in her hand. Yes, our date of engagement was out; she had heard of my losses, my defeats, the destruction of my hopes, the expenditure of my wealth, and has taken the first opportunity which strict law afforded to break off her engagment with one bankrupt in fortune and fame. Many a maiden would have done—perhaps in prudence should have done—this; but that woman's name should not have been Eveline Berenger."

He leaned on his esquire's arm, and for an instant laid his head on his shoulder with a depth of emotion which Guarine had never before seen him betray, and which, in awkward kindness, he could only attempt to console by bidding his master, "Be of good courage; he had lost but a woman."

"This is no selfish emotion, Philip," said the Constable, resuming self-command. "I grieve less that she has left me than that she has misjudged me: that she has treated me as the pawnbroker does his wretched creditor, who arrests the pledge as the very moment elapses within which it might have been relieved. Did she then think that I in my turn would have been a creditor so rigid—that I, who, since I knew her, scarce deemed myself worthy of her when I had wealth and fame, should insist on her sharing my diminished

and degraded fortunes? How little she ever knew me, or how selfish must she have supposed my misfortunes to have made me! But be it so; she is gone, and may she be happy! The thought that she disturbed me shall pass from my mind; and I will think she has done that which I myself, as her best friend, must in honor have advised."

So saying, his countenance, to the surprise of his attendants, resumed its usual firm composure.

"I give you joy," said the esquire, in a whisper to the minstrel; "your evil news have wounded less deeply than, doubtless, you believed was possible."

"Alas!" replied the minstrel, "I have others and worse behind."

This answer was made in an equivocal tone of voice, corresponding to the peculiarity of his manner, and, like that seeming emotion, of a deep but very doubtful character.

"Eveline Berenger is then married," said the Constable; "and, let me make a wild guess—she has not abandoned the family, though she has forsaken the individual—she is still a Lacy, ha? Dolt that thou art, wilt thou not understand me—she is married to Damian de Lacy—to my nephew!"

The effort with which the Constable gave breath to this supposition formed a strange contrast to the constrained smile to which he compelled his features while he uttered it. With such a smile a man about to drink poison might name a health, as he put the fatal beverage to his lips.

"No, my lord, not *married*," answered the minstrel, with an emphasis on the word, which the Constable knew how to interpret.

"No—no," he replied quickly, "not married, perhaps, but engaged—troth-plighted. Wherefore not? The date of her old affiance was out, why not enter into a new engagement?"

"The Lady Eveline and Sir Damian de Lacy are not affianced that I know of," answered his attendant.

This reply drove De Lacy's patience to extremity.

"Dog! dost thou trifle with me!" he exclaimed. "Vile wire pincher, thou torturest me! Speak the worst at once, or I will presently make thee minstrel to the household of Satan."

Calm and collected did the minstrel reply—"The Lady Eveline and Sir Damian are neither married nor affianced, my lord. They haved loved and lived together—*par amours*."

"Dog, and son of a dog," said De Lacy, "thou liest!" And, seizing the minstrel by the breast, the exasperated baron shook him with his whole strength. But, great as that strength was, it was unable to stagger Vidal, a practised wrestler, in the firm posture which he had assumed, any more than his master's wrath could disturb the composure of the minstrel's bearing.

"Confess thou hast lied," said the Constable, releasing him, after having effected by his violence no greater degree of agitation than the exertion of human force produces upon the rocking stones of the Druids, which may be shaken, indeed, but not displaced.

"Were a lie to buy my own life, yea, the lives of all my tribe," said the minstrel, "I would not tell one. But truth itself is ever termed falsehood when it counteracts the train of our passions."

"Hear him, Philip Guarine—hear him!" exclaimed the Constable, turning hastily to his squire. "He tells me of my disgrace—of the dishonor of my house—of the depravity of those whom I have loved the best in the world—he tells me of it with a calm look, an eye composed, an unfaltering tongue. Is this—can it be natural? Is De Lacy sunk so low, that his dishonor shall be told by a common strolling minstrel, as calmly as if it were a theme for a vain ballad? Perhaps thou wilt make it one, ha!" as he concluded, darting a furious glance at the minstrel.

"Perhaps I might, my lord," replied the minstrel, "were it not that I must record therein the disgrace of Renault Vidal, who served a lord without either patience to bear insults and wrongs or spirit to revenge them on the authors of his shame."

"Thou art right—thou art right, good fellow," said the Constable, hastily: "it is vengeance now alone which is left us. And yet upon whom?"

As he spoke, he walked shortly and hastily to and fro; and, becoming suddenly silent, stood still and wrung his hands with deep emotion.

"I told thee," said the minstrel to Guarine, "that my muse would find a tender part at last. Dost thou remember the bull-fight we saw in Spain? A thousand little darts perplexed and annoyed the noble animal ere he received the last deadly thrust from the lance of the Moorish cavalier."

"Man or fiend, be which thou wilt," replied Guarine, "that can thus drink in with pleasure and contemplate at

your ease the misery of another, I bid thee beware of me. Utter thy cold-blooded taunts in some other ear; for if my tongue be blunt, I wear a sword that is sharp enough."

"Thou hast seen me among swords," answered the minstrel, "and knowest how little terror they have for such as I am." Yet as he spoke he drew off from the esquire. He had, in fact, only addressed him in that sort of fulness of heart which would have vented itself in soliloquy if alone, and now poured itself out on the nearest auditor, without the speaker being entirely conscious of the sentiments which his speech excited.

Few minutes had elapsed before the Constable of Chester had regained the calm external semblance with which, until this last dreadful wound, he had borne all the inflictions of fortune. He turned towards his followers, and addressed the minstrel with his usual calmness, "Thou art right, good fellow," he said, "in what thou saidst to me but now, and I forgive thee the taunt which accompanied thy good counsel. Speak out, in God's name, and speak to one prepared to endure the evil which God hath sent him. Certes, a good knight is best known in battle, and a Christian in the time of trouble and adversity."

The tone in which the Constable spoke seemed to produce a corresponding effect upon the deportment of his followers. The minstrel dropped at once the cynical and audacious tone in which he had hitherto seemed to tamper with the passions of his master; and in language simple and respectful, and which even approached to sympathy, informed him of the evil news which he had collected during his absence. It was indeed disastrous.

The refusal of the Lady Eveline Berenger to admit Monthermer and his forces into her castle had of course given circulation and credence to all the calumnies which had been circulated to her prejudice and that of Damian de Lacy; and there were many who, for various causes, were interested in spreading and supporting these slanders. A large force had been sent into the country to subdue the insurgent peasants, and the knights and nobles despatched for that purpose failed not to avenge to the uttermost, upon the wretched plebeians, the noble blood which they had spilled during their temporary triumph.

The followers of the unfortunate Wenlock were infected with the same persuasion. Blamed by many for a hasty and cowardly surrender of a post which might have been defended, they endeavored to vindicate themselves by alleging

the hostile demonstrations of De Lacy's cavalry as the sole cause of their premature submission.

These rumors, supported by such interested testimony, spread wide and far through the land; and, joined to the undeniable fact that Damian had sought refuge in the strong castle of Garde Doloureuse, which was now defending itself against the royal arms, animated the numerous enemies of the house of De Lacy, and drove its vassals and friends almost to despair, as men reduced either to disown their feudal allegiance or renounce that still more sacred fealty which they owed to their sovereign.

At this crisis they received intelligence that the wise and active monarch by whom the scepter of England was then swayed was moving towards that part of England at the head of a large body of soldiers, for the purpose at once of pressing the siege of the Garde Doloureuse and completing the suppression of the insurrection of the peasantry, which Guy Monthermer had nearly accomplished.

In this emergency, and when the friends and dependants of the house of Lacy scarcely knew which hand to turn to, Randal, the Constable's kinsman, and, after Damian, his heir, suddenly appeared amongst them with a royal commission to raise and command such followers of the family as might not desire to be involved in the supposed treason of the Constable's delegate. In troublesome times men's vices are forgotten, provided they display activity, courage, and prudence, the virtues then most required; and the appearance of Randal, who was by no means deficient in any of these attributes, was received as a good omen by the followers of his cousin. They quickly gathered around him, surrendered to the royal mandate such strongholds as they possessed, and, to vindicate themselves from any participation in the alleged crimes of Damian, they distinguished themselves, under Randal's command, against such scattered bodies of peasantry as still kept the field or lurked in the mountains and passes; and conducted themselves with such severity after success as made the troops even of Monthermer appear gentle and clement in comparison of those of De Lacy. Finally, with the banner of his ancient house displayed, and five hundred good men assembled under it, Randal appeared before the Garde Doloureuse and joined Henry's camp there.

The castle was already hardly pressed, and the few defenders, disabled by wounds, watching, and privation, had now the additional discouragement to see displayed against

their walls the only banner in England under which they had hoped forces might be mustered for their aid.

The high-spirited entreaties of Eveline, unbent by adversity and want, gradually lost effect on the defenders of the castle; and proposals for surrender were urged and discussed by a tumultuary council, into which not only the inferior officers, but many of the common men, had thrust themselves, as in a period of such general distress as unlooses all the bonds of discipline, and leaves each man at liberty to speak and act for himself. To their surprise, in the midst of their discussions, Damian de Lacy, arisen from the sick-bed to which he had been so long confined, appeared among them, pale and feeble, his cheek tinged with the ghastly look which is left by long illness; he leaned on his page Amelot. "Gentlemen," he said, "and soldiers—yet why should I call you either? Gentlemen are ever ready to die in behalf of a lady, soldiers hold life in scorn compared to their honor."

"Out upon him—out upon him!" exclaimed one of the soldiers, interrupting him; "he would have us, who are innocent, die the death of traitors, and be hanged in our armor over the walls, rather than part with his leman."

"Peace, irreverent slave!" said Damian, in a voice like thunder, "or my last blow shall be a mean one, aimed against such a caitiff as thou art. And you," he continued, addressing the rest—"you, who are shrinking from the toils of your profession, because, if you persist in a course of honor, death may close them a few years sooner than it needs must—you, who are scared like children at the sight of a death's-head, do not suppose that Damian de Lacy would desire to shelter himself at the expense of those lives which you hold so dear. Make your bargain with King Henry. Deliver me up to his justice, or his severity; or, if you like it better, strike my head from my body, and hurl it, as a peace-offering, from the walls of the castle. To God, in His good time, will I trust for the clearance of mine honor. In a word, surrender me, dead or alive, or open the gates and permit me to surrender myself. Only, as ye are men, since I may not say better of ye, care at least for the safety of your mistress, and make such terms as may secure HER safety, and save yourselves from the dishonor of being held cowardly and perjured caitiffs in your graves."

"Methinks the youth speaks well and reasonably," said Wilkin Flammock. "Let us e'en make a grace of surrendering his body up to the King, and assure thereby such terms

as we can for ourselves and the lady, ere the last morsel of our provision is consumed."

"I would hardly have proposed this measure," said, or rather mumbled, Father Aldrovand, who had recently lost four of his front teeth by a stone from a sling—"yet, being so generously offered by the party principally concerned, I hold with the learned scholiast, *Volenti non fit injuria.*"

"Priest and Fleming," said the old bannerman, Ralph Genvil, "I see how the wind stirreth you; but you deceive yourselves if you think to make our young master, Sir Damian, a scapegoat for your light lady. Nay, never frown nor fume, Sir Damian; if you know not your safest course, we know it for you. Followers of De Lacy, throw yourselves on your horses, and two men on one, if it be necessary; we will take this stubborn boy in the midst of us, and the dainty Squire Amelot shall be prisoner too, if he trouble us with his peevish opposition. Then let us make a fair sally upon the siegers. Those who can cut their way through will shift well enough; those who fall will be provided for."

A shout from the troopers of Lacy's band approved this proposal. Whilst the followers of Berenger expostulated in loud and angry tone, Eveline, summoned by the tumult, in vain endeavored to appease it; and the anger and entreaties of Damian were equally lost on his followers. To each and either the answer was the same.

"Have you no care of it. Because you love *par amours*, is it reasonable you should throw away your life and ours?" So exclaimed Genvil to De Lacy; and in softer language, but with equal obstinacy, the followers of Raymond Berenger refused on the present occasion to listen to the commands or prayers of his daughter.

Wilkin Flammock had retreated from the tumult when he saw the turn which matters had taken. He left the castle by a sally-port, of which he had been entrusted with the key, and proceeded without observation or opposition to the royal camp, where he requested access to the sovereign. This was easily obtained, and Wilkin speedily found himself in the presence of King Henry. The monarch was in his royal pavilion, attended by two of his sons, Richard and John, who afterwards swayed the scepter of England with very different auspices.

"How now? What art thou?" was the royal question.

"An honest man, from the castle of the Garde Doloureuse."

"Thou mayst be honest," replied the sovereign, "but thou comest from a nest of traitors."

"Such as they are, my lord, it is my purpose to put them at your royal disposal; for they have no longer the wisdom to guide themselves, and lack alike prudence to hold out and grace to submit. But I would first know of your Grace to what terms you will admit the defenders of yonder garrison?"

"To such as kings give to traitors," said Henry, sternly—"sharp knives and tough cords."

"Nay, my gracious lord, you must be kinder than that amounts to, if the castle is to be rendered by my means; else will your cords and knives have only my poor body to work upon, and you will be as far as ever from the inside of the Garde Doloureuse."

The King looked at him fixedly. "Thou knowest," he said, "the law of arms; here, provost-marshal, stands a traitor and yonder stands a tree."

"And here is a throat," said the stout-hearted Fleming, unbuttoning the collar of his doublet.

"By mine honor," said Prince Richard, "a sturdy and faithful yeoman! It were better send such fellows their dinner, and then buffet it out with them for the castle, than to starve them as the beggarly Frenchmen famish their hounds."

"Peace, Richard," said his father; "thy wit is over green, and thy blood over hot, to make thee my counselor here. And you, knave, speak you some reasonable terms, and we will not be over strict with thee."

"First, then," said the Fleming, "I stipulate full and free pardon for life, limb, body, and goods to me, Wilkin Flammock, and my daughter Rose."

"A true Fleming," said Prince John; "he takes care of himself in the first instance."

"His request," said the King, "is reasonable. What next?"

"Safety in life, honor, and land for the demoiselle Eveline Berenger."

"How, sir knave!" said the King, angrily, "is it for such as thou to dictate to our judgment or clemency in the case of a noble Norman lady? Confine thy mediation to such as thyself; or rather render us this castle without farther delay, and be assured thy doing so will be of more service to the traitors within than weeks more of resistance, which must and shall be bootless."

The Fleming stood silent, unwilling to surrender without some specific terms, yet half convinced, from the situation in which he had left the garrison of the Garde Doloureuse, that his admitting the king's forces would be, perhaps, the best he could do for Lady Eveline.

"I like thy fidelity, fellow," said the King, whose acute eye perceived the struggle in the Fleming's bosom; "but carry not thy stubbornness too far. Have we not said we will be gracious to yonder offenders, as far as our royal duty will permit?"

"And, royal father," said Prince John, interposing, "I pray you let me have the grace to take first possession of the Garde Doloureuse, and the wardship or forfeiture of the offending lady."

"*I* pray you also, my royal father, to grant John's boon," said his brother Richard, in a tone of mockery. "Consider, royal father, it is the first desire he hath shown to approach the barriers of the castle, though we have attacked them forty times at least. Marry, cross-bow and mangonel were busy on the former occasions, and it is like they will be silent now."

"Peace, Richard," said the King; "your words, aimed at thy brother's honor, pierce my heart. John, thou hast thy boon as concerns the castle; for this unhappy young lady, we will take her in our own charge. Fleming, how many men wilt thou undertake to admit?"

Ere Flammock could answer, a squire approached Prince Richard, and whispered in his ear, yet so as to be heard by all present, "We have discovered that some internal disturbance, or other cause unknown, has withdrawn many of the warders from the castle walls and that a sudden attack might——"

"Dost thou hear that, John?" exclaimed Richard. "Ladders, man—get ladders, and to the wall. How I should delight to see thee on the highest round—thy knees shaking, thy hands grasping convulsively, like those of one in an ague fit—all air around thee, save a baton or two of wood—the moat below—half a dozen pikes at thy throat——"

"Peace, Richard, for shame, if not for charity!" said his father, in a tone of anger, mingled with grief. "And thou, John, get ready for the assault."

"As soon as I have put on my armor, father," answered the prince; and withdrew slowly, with a visage so blank as to promise no speed in his preparations.

His brother laughed as he retired, and said to his squire,

"It were no bad jest, Alberick, to carry the place ere John can change his silk doublet for a steel one."

So saying, he hastily withdrew, and his father exclaimed in paternal distress, "Out, alas! as much too hot as his brother is too cold; but it is the manlier fault. Gloucester," said he to that celebrated earl, "take sufficient strength and follow Prince Richard, to guard and sustain him. If any one can rule him, it must be a knight of thy established fame. Alas! alas! for what sin have I deserved the affliction of these cruel family feuds?"

"Be comforted, my lord," said the chancellor, who was also in attendance.

"Speak not of comfort to a father whose sons are at discord with each other, and agree only in their disobedience to him!"

Thus spoke Henry the Second, than whom no wiser, or, generally speaking, more fortunate monarch ever sat upon the throne of England; yet whose life is a striking illustration how family dissensions can tarnish the most brilliant lot to which Heaven permits humanity to aspire, and how little gratified ambition, extended power, and the highest reputation in war and in peace can do towards curing the wounds of domestic affliction.

The sudden and fiery attack of Richard, who hastened to the escalade at the head of a score of followers, collected at random, had the complete effect of surprise; and having surmounted the walls with their ladders, before the contending parties within were almost aware of the assault, the assailants burst open the gates, and admitted Gloucester, who had hastily followed with a strong body of men-at-arms. The garrison, in their state of surprise, confusion, and disunion, offered but little resistance, and would have been put to the sword, and the place plundered, had not Henry himself entered it, and, by his personal exertions and authority, restrained the excesses of the dissolute soldiery.

The King conducted himself, considering the times and the provocation, with laudable moderation. He contented himself with disarming and dismissing the common soldiers, giving them some trifle to carry them out of the country, lest want should lead them to form themselves into bands of robbers. The officers were more severely treated, being for the greater part thrown into dungeons, to abide the course of the law. In particular, imprisonment was the lot of Damian de Lacy, against whom, believing the various charges

with which he was loaded, Henry was so highly incensed, that he proposed to make him an example to all false knights and disloyal subjects. To the Lady Eveline Berenger he assigned her own apartment as a prison, in which she was honorably attended by Rose and Alice, but guarded with the utmost strictness. It was generally reported that her demesnes would be declared a forfeiture to the crown, and bestowed, at least in part, upon Randal de Lacy, who had done good service during the siege. Her person, it was thought, was destined to the seclusion of some distant French nunnery, where she might at leisure repent her of her follies and her rashness.

Father Aldrovand was delivered up to the discipline of his convent, long experience having very effectually taught Henry the imprudence of infringing on the privileges of the church ; although, when the King first beheld him with a rusty corslet clasped over his frock, he with difficulty repressed the desire to cause him to be hanged over the battlements, to preach to the ravens.

With Wilkin Flammock, Henry held much conference, particularly on the subject of manufactures and commerce ; on which the sound-headed, though blunt-spoken, Fleming was well qualified to instruct an intelligent monarch. "Thy intentions," he said, "shall not be forgotten, good fellow, though they have been anticipated by the headlong valor of my son Richard, which has cost some poor caitiffs their lives : Richard loves not to sheathe a bloodless weapon. But thou and thy countrymen shall return to thy mills yonder, with a full pardon for past offenses, so that you meddle no more with such treasonable matters."

"And our privileges and duties, my liege ?" said Flammock. "Your Majesty knows well we are vassals to the lord of this castle, and must follow him in battle."

"It shall no longer be so," said Henry : "I will form a community of Flemings here, and thou, Flammock, shalt be mayor, that thou mayst not plead feudal obedience for a relapse into treason."

"Treason, my liege !" said Flammock, longing, yet scarce venturing, to interpose a word in behalf of Lady Eveline, for whom, despite the constitutional coolness of his temperament, he really felt much interest—"I would that your Grace but justly knew how many threads went to that woof."

"Peace, sirrah ! meddle with your loom," said Henry ; "and if we deign to speak to thee concerning the mechani-

cal arts which thou dost profess, take it for no warrant to intrude farther on our privacy."

The Fleming retired, rebuked, and in silence; and the fate of the unhappy prisoners remained in the King's bosom. He himself took up his lodging in the castle of the Garde Doloureuse, as a convenient station for sending abroad parties to suppress and extinguish all the embers of rebellion; and so active was Randal de Lacy on these occasions, that he appeared daily to rise in the King's grace, and was gratified with considerable grants out of the domains of Berenger and Lacy, which the King seemed already to treat as forfeited property. Most men considered this growing favor of Randal as a perilous omen, both for the life of young De Lacy and for the fate of the unfortunate Eveline.

CHAPTER XXX

A vow, a vow—I have a vow in Heaven.
Shall I bring perjury upon my soul?
No, not for Venice.

Merchant of Venice.

THE conclusion of the last chapter contains the tidings with which the minstrel greeted his unhappy master, Hugo de Lacy; not indeed with the same detail of circumstances with which we have been able to invest the narrative, but so as infer the general and appalling facts, that his betrothed bride and beloved and trusted kinsman had leagued together for his dishonor, had raised the banner of rebellion against their lawful sovereign, and, failing in their audacious attempt, had brought the life of one of them, at least, into the most imminent danger, and the fortunes of the house of Lacy, unless some instant remedy could be found, to the very verge of ruin.

Vidal marked the countenance of his master as he spoke, with the same keen observation which the chirurgeon gives to the progress of his dissecting-knife. There was grief on the Constable's features—deep grief, but without the expression of abasement or prostration which usually accompanies it; anger and shame were there, but they were both of a noble character, seemingly excited by his bride and nephew's transgressing the laws of allegiance, honor, and virtue, rather than by the disgrace and damage which he himself sustained through their crime.

The minstrel was so much astonished at this change of deportment from the sensitive acuteness of agony which attended the beginning of his narrative, that he stepped back two paces, and gazing on the Constable with wonder, mixed with admiration, exclaimed, "We have heard of martyrs in Palestine, but this exceeds them!"

"Wonder not so much, good friend," said the Constable, patiently; "it is the first blow of the lance or mace which pierces or stuns; those which follow are little felt." *

"Think, my lord," said Vidal, "all is lost—love, dominion, high office, and bright fame: so late a chief among nobles, now a poor palmer!"

* See Sensibility to Pain. Note 12.

"Wouldst thou make sport with my misery?" said Hugo, sternly; "but even that comes, of course, behind my back, and why should it not be endured when said to my face? Know, then, minstrel, and put it in song if you list, that Hugo de Lacy, having lost all he carried to Palestine, and all which he left at home, is still lord of his own mind; and adversity can no more shake him than the breeze which strips the oak of its leaves can tear up the trunk by the roots."

"Now, by the tomb of my father," said the minstrel, rapturously, "this man's nobleness is too much for my resolve!" and stepping hastily to the Constable, he kneeled on one knee, and caught his hand more freely than the state maintained by men of De Lacy's rank usually permitted.

"Here," said Vidal, "on this hand—this noble hand, I renounce——"

But, ere he could utter another word, Hugo de Lacy, who, perhaps, felt the freedom of the action as an intrusion on his fallen condition, pulled back his hand, and bid the minstrel, with a stern frown, arise, and remember that misfortune made not De Lacy a fit personage for a mummery.

Renault Vidal rose rebuked. "I had forgot," he said, "the distance between an Armorican violer and a high Norman baron. I thought that the same depth of sorrow, the same burst of joy, leveled, for a moment at least, those artificial barriers by which men are divided. But it is well as it is. Live within the limits of your rank, as heretofore within your donjon tower and your fosses, my lord, undisturbed by the sympathy of any mean man like me. I, too, have my duties to discharge."

"And now to the Garde Doloureuse," said the baron, turning to Philip Guarine—"God knoweth how well it deserveth the name!—there to learn, with our own eyes and ears, the truth of these woful tidings. Dismount, minstrel, and give me thy palfrey. I would, Guarine, that I had one for thee; as for Vidal, his attendance is less necessary. I will face my foes, or my misfortunes, like a man—that be assured of, violer; and look not so sullen, knave—I will not forget old adherents."

"One of them, at least, will not forget you, my lord," replied the minstrel, with his usual dubious tone of look and emphasis.

But, just as the Constable was about to prick forwards, two persons appeared on the path, mounted on one horse, who, hidden by some dwarf-wood, had come very near them

without being perceived. They were male and female; and the man, who rode foremost, was such a picture of famine as the eyes of the pilgrims had scarce witnessed in all the wasted lands through which they had traveled. His features, naturally sharp and thin, had disappeared almost entirely among the uncombed gray beard and hairs with which they were overshadowed; and it was but the glimpse of a long nose, that seemed as sharp as the edge of a knife, and the twinkling sparkle of his gray eyes, which gave any intimation of his lineaments. His leg, in the wide old boot which inclosed it, looked like the handle of a mop left by chance in a pail; his arms were about the thickness of riding-rods; and such parts of his person as were not concealed by the tatters of a huntsman's cassock seemed rather the appendages of a mummy than a live man.

The female who sat behind this specter exhibited also some symptoms of extenuation; but, being a brave, jolly dame naturally, famine had not been able to render her a spectacle so rueful as the anatomy behind which she rode. Dame Gillian's cheek (for it was reader's old acquaintance) had indeed lost the rosy hue of good cheer and the smoothness of complexion which art and easy living had formerly substituted for the more delicate bloom of youth; her eyes were sunken, and had lost much of their bold and roguish luster; but she was still in some measure herself, and the remnants of former finery, together with the tight-drawn scarlet hose, though sorely faded, showed still a remnant of coquettish pretension.

So soon as she came within sight of the pilgrims she began to punch Raoul with the end of her riding-rod. "Try thy new trade, man, since thou art unfit for any other—to the good men—to them, crave their charity."

"Beg from beggars!" muttered Raoul; "that were hawking at sparrows, dame."

"It will bring our hand in use though," said Gillian; and commenced, in a whining tone, "God love you, holy men who have had the grace to go to the Holy Land, and, what is more, have had the grace to come back again—I pray, bestow some of your alms upon my poor old husband, who is a miserable object, as you see, and upon one who has the bad luck to be his wife—Heaven help me!"

"Peace, woman, and hear what I have to say," said the Constable, laying his hand upon the bridle of the horse. "I have present occasion for that horse and——"

"By the hunting-horn of St. Hubert, but thou gettest

him not without blows!" answered the old huntsman. "A fine world it is, when palmers turn horse-stealers."

"Peace, fellow!" said the Constable, sternly. "I say I have occasion presently for the service of thy horse. Here be two gold bezants for a day's use of the brute; it is well worth the fee-simple of him, were he never returned."

"But the palfrey is an old acquaintance, master," said Raoul; "and if perchance——"

"Out upon 'if' and 'perchance' both," said the dame, giving her husband so determined a thrust as wellnigh pushed him out of the saddle. "Off the horse! and thank God and this worthy man for the help He has sent us in extremity. What signifies the palfrey, when we have not enough to get food either for the brute or ourselves, not though we would eat grass and corn with him, like King Somebody, whom the good father used to read us to sleep about?"

"A truce with your prating, dame," said Raoul, offering his assistance to help her from the croupe; but she preferred that of Guarine, who, though advanced in years, retained the advantage of his stout soldierly figure.

"I humbly thank your goodness," said she, as, having first kissed her, the squire set her on the ground. "And pray, sir, are ye come from the Holy Land? Heard ye any tidings there of him that was Constable of Chester?"

De Lacy, who was engaged in removing the pillion from behind the saddle, stopped short in his task, and said, "Ha, dame! what would you with him?"

"A great deal, good palmer, an I could light on him, for his lands and offices are all to be given, it's like, to that false thief, his kinsman."

"What! to Damian, his nephew?" exclaimed the Constable, in harsh and hasty tone.

"Lord, how you startle me, sir!" said Gillian; then continued, turning to Philip Guarine, "Your friend is a hasty man, belike."

"It is the fault of the sun he has lived under so long," said the squire; "but look you answer his questions truly, and he will make it the better for you."

Gillian instantly took the hint. "Was it Damian de Lacy you asked after? Alas! poor young gentleman! no offices or lands for him; more likely to have a gallows-cast, poor lad, and all for nought, as I am a true dame. Damian! no —no, it is not Damian, nor damson neither, but Randal Lacy, that must rule the roast, and have all the old man's lands, and livings, and lordships."

"What!" said the Constable, "before they know whether the old man is dead or no? Methinks that were against law and reason both."

"Ay, but Randal Lacy has brought about less likely matters. Look you, he hath sworn to the King that they have true tidings of the Constable's death; ay, and let him alone to make them soothfast enough, if the Constable were once within his danger."

"Indeed!" said the Constable. "But you are forging tales on a noble gentleman. Come—come, dame, you say this because you like not Randal Lacy."

"Like him not! And what reason have I to like him, I trow?" answered Gillian. "Is it because he seduced my simplicity to let him into the castle of the Garde Doloureuse—ay, oftener than once or twice either—when he was disguised as a pedler, and told him all the secrets of the family, and how the boy Damian and the girl Eveline were dying of love with each other, but had not courage to say a word of it for fear of the Constable, though he were a thousand miles off? You seem concerned, worthy sir; may I offer your reverend worship a trifling sup from my bottle, which is sovereign for *tremor cordis* and fits of the spleen?"

"No—no," ejaculated De Lacy; "I was but grieved with the shooting of an old wound. But, dame, I warrant me this Damian and Eveline, as you call them, became better, closer friends in time?"

"They! not they indeed, poor simpletons!" answered the dame; "they wanted some wise counselor to go between and advise them. For, look you, sir, if old Hugo be dead, as is most like, it were more natural that his bride and his nephew should inherit his lands than this same Randal, who is but a distant kinsman, and a forsworn caitiff to boot. Would you think it, reverend pilgrim, after the mountains of gold he promised me, when the castle was taken, and he saw I could serve him no more, he called me old beldame, and spoke of the beadle and the cucking-stool? Yes, reverend sir, old beldame and cucking-stool were his best words when he knew I had no one to take my part save old Raoul, who cannot take his own. But if grim old Hugo bring back his weather-beaten carcass from Palestine, and have but half the devil in him which he had when he was fool enough to go away, St. Mary, but I will do his kinsman's office to him!"

There was a pause when she had done speaking.

"Thou say'st," at length exclaimed the Constable, "that

Damian de Lacy and Eveline love each other, yet are unconscious of guilt, or falsehood, or ingratitude to me—I would say, to their relative in Palestine?"

"Love, sir! in troth and so it is. They do love each other," said Gillian, "but it is like angels, or like lambs—or like fools, if you will; for they would never so much as have spoken together, but for a prank of that same Randal Lacy's."

"How!" demanded the Constable—"a prank of Randal's? What motive had he that these two should meet?"

"Nay, their meeting was none of his seeking; but he had formed a plan to carry off the Lady Eveline himself, for he was a wild rover, this same Randal, and so he came disguised as a merchant of falcons, and trained out my old stupid Raoul, and the Lady Eveline, and all of us, as if to have an hour's mirth in hawking at the heron. But he had a band of Welsh kites in readiness to pounce upon us; and, but for the sudden making in a Damian to our rescue, it is undescribable to think what might have come of us; and Damian, being hurt in the onslaught, was carried to the Garde Doloureuse in mere necessity; and but to save his life, it is my belief my lady would never have asked him to cross the drawbridge, even if he had offered."

"Woman," said the Constable, "think what thou say'st! If thou hast done evil in these matters heretofore, as I suspect from thine own story, think not to put it right by a train of new falsehoods, merely from spite at missing thy reward."

"Palmer," said old Raoul, with his broken-toned voice, cracked by many a halloo, "I am wont to leave the business of tale-bearing to my wife Gillian, who will tongue-pad it with any shrew in Christendom. But thou speak'st like one having some interest in these matters, and therefore I will tell thee plainly, that, although this woman has published her own shame in avowing her correspondence with that same Randal Lacy, yet what she has said is true as the Gospel; and, were it my last word, I would say that Damian and the Lady Eveline are innocent of all treason and all dishonesty, as is the babe unborn. But what avails what the like of us say, who are even driven to the very begging for mere support, after having lived at a good house and in a good lord's service—blessing be with him!"

"But hark you," continued the Constable, "are there left no ancient servants of the house, that could speak out as well as you?"

"Humph!" answered the huntsman, "men are not willing to babble when Randal Lacy is cracking his thong above their heads. Many are slain or starved to death, some disposed of, some spirited away. But there are the weaver Flammock and his daughter Rose, who know as much of the matter as we do."

"What! Wilkin Flammock, the stout Netherlander," said the Constable—"he and his blunt but true daughter Rose? I will venture my life on their faith. Where dwell they? What has been their lot amidst these changes?"

"And in God's name who are *you* that ask these questions?" said Dame Gillian. "Husband—husband, we have been too free; there is something in that look and that tone which I should remember."

"Yes, look at me more fixedly," said the Constable, throwing back the hood which had hitherto in a great degree obscured his features.

"On your knees—on your knees, Raoul," exclaimed Gillian, dropping on her own at the same time; "it is the Constable himself, and he has heard me call him old Hugo!"

"It is all that is left of him who was the Constable, at least," replied De Lacy; "and old Hugo willingly forgives your freedom, in consideration of your good news. Where are Flammock and his daughter?"

"Rose is with the Lady Eveline," said Dame Gillian; "her ladyship, belike, chose her for bower-woman in place of me, although Rose was never fit to attire so much as a Dutch doll."

"The faithful girl!" said the Constable. "And where is Flammock?"

"Oh, for him, he has pardon and favor from the King," said Raoul, "and is at his own house, with his rabble of weavers, close beside the Battlebridge, as they now call the place where your lordship quelled the Welsh."

"Thither will I then," said the Constable; "and will then see what welcome King Henry of Anjou has for an old servant. You two must accompany me."

"My lord," said Gillian, with hesitation, "you know poor folk are little thanked for interference with great men's affairs. I trust your lordship will be able to protect us if we speak the truth, and that you will not look back with displeasure on what I did, acting for the best."

"Peace, dame, with a wanion to ye!" said Raoul. "Will you think of your own old sinful carcass, when you should be saving your sweet young mistress from shame and oppres-

sion? And for thy ill tongue, and worse practises, his lordship knows they are bred in the bone of thee."

"Peace, good fellow!" said the Constable; "we will not look back on thy wife's errors, and your fidelity shall be rewarded. For you, my faithful followers," he said, turning towards Guarine and Vidal, "when De Lacy shall receive his rights, of which he doubts nothing, his first wish shall be to reward your fidelity."

"Mine, such as it is, has been and shall be its own reward," said Vidal. "I will not accept favors from him in prosperity who in adversity refused me his hand: our account stands yet open."

"Go to, thou art a fool; but thy profession hath a privilege to be humorous," said the Constable, whose weather-beaten and homely features looked even handsome when animated by gratitude to Heaven and benevolence towards mankind. "We will meet," he said "at Battlebridge, an hour before [after] vespers; I shall have much achieved before that time."

"The space is short," said the esquire.

"I have won a battle in yet shorter," replied the Constable.

"In which," said the minstrel, "many a man has died that thought himself well assured of life and victory."

"Even so shall my dangerous cousin Randal find his schemes of ambition blighted," answered the Constable; and rode forwards, accompanied by Raoul and his wife, who had remounted their palfrey, while the minstrel and squire followed a-foot, and, of course, much more slowly.

CHAPTER XXXI

Oh, fear not, fear not, good Lord John,
  That I would you betray,
Or sue requital for a debt,
  Which nature cannot pay.

Bear witness, all ye sacred powers,
  Ye lights that 'gin to shine,
This night shall prove the sacred tie
  That binds your faith and mine.

Ancient Scottish Ballad.

LEFT behind by their master, the two dependants of Hugo de Lacy marched on in sullen silence, like men who dislike and distrust each other, though bound to one common service, and partners, therefore, in the same hopes and fears. The dislike, indeed, was chiefly upon Guarine's side, for nothing could be more indifferent to Renault Vidal than was his companion, farther than as he was conscious that Philip loved him not, and was not unlikely, so far as lay in his power, to thwart some plans which he had nearly at heart. He took little notice of his companion, but hummed over to himself, as for the exercise of his memory, romances and songs, many of which were composed in languages which Guarine, who had only an ear for his native Norman, did not understand.

They had proceeded together in this sullen manner for nearly two hours, when they were met by a groom on horseback, leading a saddled palfrey. "Pilgrims," said the man, after looking at them with some attention, "which of you is called Philip Guarine?"

"I, for fault of a better," said the esquire, "reply to that name."

"Thy lord, in that case, commends him to you," said the groom; "and sends you this token, by which you shall know that I am his true messenger."

He showed the esquire a rosary, which Philip instantly recognized as that used by the Constable.

"I acknowledge the token," he said; "speak my master's pleasure."

"He bids me say," replied the rider, "that his visit

thrives as well as is possible, and that this very evening, by time that the sun sets, he will be possessed of his own. He desires, therefore, you will mount this palfrey, and come with me to the Garde Doloureuse, as your presence will be wanted there."

"It is well, and I obey him," said the esquire, much pleased with the import of the message, and not dissatisfied at being separated from his traveling companion.

"And what charge for me?" said the minstrel, addressing the messenger.

"If you, as I guess, are the minstrel, Renault Vidal, you are to abide your master at the Battlebridge, according to the charge formerly given."

"I will meet him, as in duty bound," was Vidal's answer; and scarce was it uttered, ere the two horsemen, turning their backs on him, rode briskly forward, and were speedily out of sight.

It was now four hours past noon, and the sun was declining, yet there was more than three hours' space to the time of rendezvous, and the distance from the place did not now exceed four miles. Vidal, therefore, either for the sake of rest or reflection, withdrew from the path into a thicket on the left hand, from which gushed the waters of a streamlet, fed by a small fountain that bubbled up amongst the trees. Here the traveler sat himself down, and with an air which seemed unconscious of what he was doing, bent his eye on the little sparkling font for more than half an hour, without change of posture; so that he might, in pagan times, have represented the statue of a water-god bending over his urn, and attentive only to the supplies which it was pouring forth. At length, however, he seemed to recall himself from this state of deep abstraction, drew himself up, and took some coarse food from his pilgrim's scrip, as if suddenly reminded that life is not supported without means. But he had probably something at his heart which affected his throat or appetite. After a vain attempt to swallow a morsel, he threw it from him in disgust, and applied him to a small flask, in which he had some wine or other liquor. But seemingly this also turned distasteful, for he threw from him both scrip and bottle, and, bending down to the spring, drank deeply of the pure element, bathed in it his hands and face, and, arising from the fountain apparently refreshed, moved slowly on his way, singing as he went, but in a low and saddened tone, wild fragments of ancient poetry, in a tongue equally ancient.

Journeying on in this melancholy manner, he at length came in sight of the Battlebridge; near to which arose, in proud and gloomy strength, the celebrated castle of the Garde Doloureuse. "Here, then," he said—"here, then, I am to await the proud De Lacy. Be it so, in God's name! he shall know me better ere we part."

"So saying, he strode, with long and resolved steps, across the bridge, and ascending a mound which arose on the opposite side at some distance, he gazed for a time upon the scene beneath—the beautiful river, rich with the reflected tints of the western sky; the trees, which were already brightened to the eye, and saddened to the fancy, with the hue of autumn; and the darksome walls and towers of the feudal castle, from which, at times, flashed a glimpse of splendor, as some sentinel's arms caught and gave back a transient ray of the setting sun.

The countenance of the minstrel, which had hitherto been dark and troubled, seemed softened by the quiet of the scene. He threw loose his pilgrim's dress, yet suffering part of its dark folds to hang around him mantle-wise; under which appeared his minstrel's tabard. He took from his side a rote, and striking, from time to time, a Welsh descant, sung at others a lay, of which we can offer only a few fragments, literally translated from the ancient language in which they were chanted, premising that they are in that excursive symbolical style of poetry which Taliessin, Llewarch Hen, and other bards had derived perhaps from the time of the Druids.

I asked of my harp, "Who hath injured thy chords?"
And she replied, "The crooked finger, which I mocked in my tune."
A blade of silver may be bended; a blade of steel abideth.
Kindness fadeth away, but vengeance endureth.

The sweet taste of mead passeth from the lips;
But they are long corroded by the juice of wormwood.
The lamb is brought to the shambles, but the wolf rangeth the mountain.
Kindness fadeth away, but vengeance endureth.

I asked the red-hot iron, when it glimmered on the anvil,
"Wherefore glowest thou longer than the firebrand?"
"I was born in the dark mine, and the brand in the pleasant greenwood."
Kindness fadeth away, but vengeance endureth.

I asked the green oak of the assembly, wherefore its boughs were dry and seared like the horns of the stag,
And it showed me that a small worm had gnawed its roots.

The boy who remembered the scourge, undid the wicket of the castle at midnight.
Kindness fadeth away, but vengeance endureth.

Lightning destroyeth temples, though their spires pierce the clouds;
Storms destroy armadas, though their sails intercept the gale.
He that is in his glory falleth, and that by a contemptible enemy.
Kindness fadeth away, but vengeance endureth.

More of the same wild images were thrown out, each bearing some analogy, however fanciful and remote, to the theme which occurred like a chorus at the close of each stanza; so that the poetry resembled a piece of music, which, after repeated excursions through fanciful variations, returns ever and anon to the simple melody which is the subject of ornament.

As the minstrel sung, his eyes were fixed on the bridge and its vicinity; but when, near the close of his chant, he raised up his eyes towards the distant towers of the Garde Doloureuse, he saw that the gates were opened, and that there was a mustering of guards and attendants without the barriers, as if some expedition were about to set forth, or some person of importance to appear on the scene. At the same time, glancing his eyes around, he discovered that the landscape, so solitary when he first took his seat on the gray stone from which he overlooked it, was now becoming filled with figures.

During his reverie, several persons, solitary and in groups, men, women, and children, had begun to assemble themselves on both sides of the river, and were loitering there, as if expecting some spectacle. There was also much bustling at the Flemings' mills, which, though at some distance, were also completely under his eye. A procession seemed to be arranging itself there, which soon began to move forward, with pipe and tabor, and various other instruments of music, and soon approached, in regular order, the place where Vidal was seated.

It appeared the business in hand was of a pacific character; for the graybearded old men of the little settlement, in their decent russet gowns, came first after the rustic band of music, walking in ranks of three and three, supported by their staves, and regulating the motion of the whole procession by their sober and staid pace. After these fathers of the settlement came Wilkin Flammock, mounted on his mighty war-horse, and in complete armor, save his head, like a vassal prepared to do military service for his lord. After

him followed, and in battle rank, the flower of the little colony, consisting of thirty men well armed and appointed, whose steady march, as well as their clean and glittering armor, showed steadiness and discipline, although they lacked alike the fiery glance of the French soldiery, or the look of dogged defiance which characterized the English, or the wild ecstatic impetuosity of eye which then distinguished the Welsh. The mothers and the maidens of the colony came next; then followed the children, with faces as chubby, and features as serious, and steps as grave, as their parents; and last, as a rearguard, came the youths from fourteen to twenty, armed with light lances, bows, and similar weapons becoming their age.

This procession wheeled around the base of the mound or embankment on which the minstrel was seated, crossed the bridge with the same slow and regular pace, and formed themselves into a double line, facing inwards, as if to receive some person of consequence, or witness some ceremonial. Flammock remained at the extremity of the avenue thus formed by his countrymen, and quietly, yet earnestly, engaged in making arrangements and preparations.

In the meanwhile, stragglers of different countries began to draw together, apparently brought there by mere curiosity, and formed a motley assemblage at the farther end of the bridge, which was that nearest to the castle. Two English peasants passed very near the stone on which Vidal sat. "Wilt thou sing us a song, minstrel," said one of them, "and here is a tester for thee?" throwing into his hat a small silver coin.

"I am under a vow," answered the minstrel, "and may not practise the gay science at present."

"Or you are too proud to play to English churls," said the elder peasant, "for thy tongue smacks of the Norman."

"Keep the coin, nevertheless," said the younger man. "Let the palmer have what the minstrel refuses to earn."

"I pray you reserve your bounty, kind friend," said Vidal, "I need it not; and tell me of your kindness, instead, what matters are going forward here."

"Why, know you not that we have got our Constable De Lacy again, and that he is to grant solemn investiture to the Flemish weavers of all these fine things Harry of Anjou has given? Had Edward the Confessor been alive, to give the Netherland knaves their guerdon, it would have been a cast of the gallows-tree. But come, neighbor, we shall lose the show."

So saying, they pressed down the hill.

Vidal fixed his eyes on the gates of the distant castle; and the remote waving of banners, and mustering of men on horseback, though imperfectly seen at such a distance, apprised him that one of note was about to set forth at the head of a considerable train of military attendants. Distant flourishes of trumpets, which came faintly yet distinctly on his ear, seemed to attest the same. Presently he perceived, by the dust which began to arise in columns betwixt the castle and the bridge, as well as by the nearer sound of the clarions, that the troop was advancing towards him in procession.

Vidal, on his own part, seemed as if irresolute whether to retain his present position, where he commanded a full but remote view of the whole scene, or to obtain a nearer but more partial one by involving himself in the crowd which now closed around on either hand of the bridge, unless where the avenue was kept open by the armed and arrayed Flemings.

A monk next hurried past Vidal, and on his inquiring as formerly the cause of the assembly, answered, in a muttering tone, from beneath his hood, that it was the Constable De Lacy, who, as the first act of his authority, was then and there to deliver to the Flemings a royal charter of their immunities.

"He is in haste to exercise his authority, methinks," said the minstrel.

"He that has just gotten a sword is impatient to draw it," replied the monk, who added more which the minstrel understood imperfectly; for Father Aldrovand had not recovered the injury which he had received during the siege.

Vidal, however, understood him to say, that he was to meet the Constable there, to beg his favorable intercession.

"I also will meet him," said Renault Vidal, rising suddenly from the stone which he occupied.

"Follow me then," mumbled the priest; "the Flemings know me, and will let me forward."

But Father Aldrovand being in disgrace, his influence was not so potent as he had flattered himself; and both he and the minstrel were jostled to and fro in the crowd, and separated from each other.

Vidal, however, was recognized by the English peasants who had before spoke to him. "Canst thou do any jugglers' feats, minstrel?" said one. "Thou mayst earn a fair largesse, for our Norman masters love *jonglerie*."

"I know but one," said Vidal, "and I will show it, if you will yield me some room."

They crowded a little off from him, and gave him time to throw aside his bonnet, bare his legs and knees, by stripping off the leathern buskins which swathed them, and retaining only his sandals. He then tied a parti-colored handkerchief around his swarthy and sunburnt hair, and, casting off his upper doublet, showed his brawny and nervous arms, naked to the shoulder.

But while he amused those immediately about him with these preparations, a commotion and rush among the crowd, together with the close sound of trumpets, answered by all the Flemish instruments of music, as well as the shouts in Norman and English of "Long live the gallant Constable! Our Lady for the bold De Lacy!" announced that the Constable was close at hand.

Vidal made incredible exertions to approach the leader of the procession, whose morion, distinguished by its lofty plumes, and right hand holding his truncheon or leading-staff, was all he could see, on account of the crowd of officers and armed men around him. At length his exertions prevailed, and he came within three yards of the Constable, who was then in a small circle which had been with difficulty kept clear for the purpose of the ceremonial of the day. His back was towards the minstrel, and he was in the act of bending from his horse to deliver the royal charter to Wilkin Flammock, who had knelt on one knee to receive it the more reverentially. His discharge of this duty occasioned the Constable to stoop so low that his plume seemed in the act of mixing with the flowing mane of his noble charger.

At this moment, Vidal threw himself with singular agility over the heads of the Flemings who guarded the circle; and, ere an eye could twinkle, his right knee was on the croupe of the Constable's horse, the grasp of his left hand on the collar of De Lacy's buff-coat; then, clinging to his prey like a tiger after its leap, he drew, in the same instant of time, a short, sharp dagger, and buried it in the back of the neck, just where the spine, which was severed by the stroke, serves to convey to the trunk of the human body the mysterious influences of the brain. The blow was struck with the utmost accuracy of aim and strength of arm. The unhappy horseman dropped from his saddle without groan or struggle, like a bull in the amphitheater, under the steel of the tauridor; and in the same saddle sat his murderer, brandishing the bloody poniard, and urging the horse to speed.

There was indeed a possibility of his having achieved his escape, so much were those around paralyzed for the moment by the suddenness and audacity of the enterprise; but Flammock's presence of mind did not forsake him: he seized the horse by the bridle, and, aided by those who wanted but an example, made the rider prisoner, bound his arms, and called aloud that he must be carried before King Henry. This proposal, uttered in Flammock's strong and decided tone of voice, silenced a thousand wild cries of murder and treason, which had arisen while the different and hostile natives, of which the crowd was composed, threw upon each other reciprocally the charge of treachery.

All the streams, however, now assembled in one channel, and poured with unanimous assent towards the Garde Doloureuse, excepting a few of the murdered nobleman's train, who remained to transport their master's body, in decent solemnity of mourning, from the spot which he had sought with so much pomp and triumph.

When Flammock reached the Garde Doloureuse, he was readily admitted with his prisoner, and with such witnesses as he had selected to prove the execution of the crime. To his request of an audience, he was answered that the King had commanded that none should be admitted to him for some time; yet so singular were the tidings of the Constable's slaughter, that the captain of the guard ventured to interrupt Henry's privacy, in order to communicate that event, and returned with orders that Flammock and his prisoner should be instantly admitted to the royal apartment. Here they found Henry, attended by several persons, who stood respectfully behind the royal seat in a darkened part of the room.

When Flammock entered, his large bulk and massive limbs were strangely contrasted with cheeks pale with horror at what he just witnessed, and with awe at finding himself in the royal presence-chamber. Beside him stood his prisoner, undaunted by the situation in which he was placed. The blood of his victim, which had spirted from the wound, was visible on his bare limbs and his scanty garments; but particularly upon his brow and the handkerchief with which it was bound.

Henry gazed on him with a stern look, which the other not only endured without dismay, but seemed to return with a frown of defiance.

"Does no one know this caitiff?" said Henry, looking around him.

There was no immediate answer, until Philip Guarine, stepping from the group which stood behind the royal chair, said, though with hesitation, "So please you, my liege, but for the strange guise in which he is now arrayed, I should say there was a household minstrel of my master, by name Renault Vidal."

"Thou art deceived, Norman," replied the minstrel; "my menial place and base lineage were but assumed. I am Cadwallon the Briton—Cadwallon of the Nine Lays—Cadwallon, the chief bard of Gwenwyn of Powys Land—and his avenger!"

As he uttered the last word, his looks encountered those of a palmer, who had gradually advanced from the recess in which the attendants were stationed, and now confronted him.

The Welshman's eyes looked so eagerly ghastly as if flying from their sockets, while he exclaimed, in a tone of surprise, mingled with horror, "Do the dead come before monarchs? Or, if thon art alive, *whom* have I slain? I dreamed not, surely, of that bound, and of that home blow, yet my victim stands before me! Have I not slain the Constable of Chester?"

"Thou hast indeed slain the Constable," answered the King; "but know, Welshman, it was Randal de Lacy, on whom that charge was this morning conferred, by our belief of our loyal and faithful Hugo de Lacy's having been lost upon his return from the Holy Land, as the vessel in which he had taken passage was reported to have suffered shipwreck. Thou hast cut short Randal's brief elevation but by a few hours; for to-morrow's sun would have again seen him without land or lordship."

The prisoner dropped his head on his bosom in evident despair. "I thought," he murmured, "that he had changed his slough and come forth so glorious all too soon. May the eyes drop out that were cheated with those baubles, a plumed cap and a lacquered baton!"

"I will take care, Welshman, thine eyes cheat thee not again," said the King, sternly; "before the night is an hour older, they shall be closed on all that is earthly."

"May I request of your nobleness," said the Constable, "that you will permit me to ask the unhappy man a few questions?"

"When I have demanded of him myself," said the King, "why he has dipped his hands in the blood of a noble Norman."

"Because he at whom I aimed my blow," said the Briton, his eye glancing fiercely from the King to De Lacy, and back, "had spilled the blood of the descendant of a thousand kings; to which his own gore, or thine, proud Count of Anjou, is but as the puddle of the highway to the silver fountain."

Henry's eye menaced the audacious speaker; but the King reined in his wrath when he beheld the imploring look of his servant. "What wouldst thou ask of him?" he said, "be brief, for his time is short."

"So please you, my liege, I would but demand wherefore he has for years forborne to take the life he aimed at, when it was in his power—nay, when it must have been lost but for his seemingly faithful service?"

"Norman," said Cadwallon, "I will answer thee. When I first took upon me thy service, it was well my purpose to have slain thee that night. There stands the man," pointing to Philip Guarine, "to whose vigilance thou owed'st thy safety."

"Indeed," said De Lacy, "I do remember some indications of such a purpose; but why didst thou forego it, when following opportunities put it in thy power?"

"When the slayer of my sovereign became God's soldier," answered Cadwallon, "and served his cause in Palestine, he was safe from my earthly vengeance."

"A wonderful forbearance on the part of a Welsh assassin!" said the King, scornfully.

"Ay," answered Cadwallon: "and which certain Christian princes have scarce attained to, who have never neglected the chance of pillage or conquest afforded by the absence of a rival in the Holy Crusade."

"Now, by the Holy Rood——" said Henry, on the point of bursting out, for the insult affected him peculiarly, but, suddenly stopping, he said, with an air of contempt, "To the gallows with the knave!"

"But one other question," said De Lacy, "Renault, or by whatever name thou art called. Ever since my return thou hast rendered me service inconsistent with thy stern resolution upon my life: thou didst aid me in my shipwreck, and didst guide me safely through Wales, where my name would have ensured my death; and all this after the crusade was accomplished?"

"I could explain thy doubt," said the bard, "but that it might be thought I was pleading for my life."

"Hesitate not for that," said the King; "for, were

our Holy Father to intercede for thee, his prayers were in vain."

"Well, then," said the bard, "know the truth: I was too proud to permit either wave or Welshman to share in my revenge. Know also—what is perhaps Cadwallon's weakness—use and habit had divided my feelings towards De Lacy between aversion and admiration. I still contemplated my revenge, but as something which I might never complete, and which seemed rather an image in the clouds than an object to which I must one day draw near. And when I beheld thee," he said, turning to De Lacy, "this very day so determined, so sternly resolved, to bear thy impending fate like a man—that you seemed to me to resemble the last tower of a ruined palace, still holding its head to heaven, when its walls of splendor, and its bowers of delight, lay in desolation around—"May I perish," I said to myself in secret, "ere I perfect its ruin!" Yes, De Lacy, then—even then, but some hours since, hadst thou accepted my proffered hand, I had served thee as never follower served master. You rejected it with scorn; and yet, notwithstanding that insult, it required that I should have seen you, as I thought, trampling over the field in which you slew my master, in the full pride of Norman insolence, to animate my resolution to strike the blow which, meant for you, has slain at least one of your usurping race. I will answer no more questions. Lead on to ax or gallows—it is indifferent to Cadwallon; my soul will soon be with my free and noble ancestry, and with my beloved and royal patron."

"My liege and prince," said De Lacy, bending his knee to Henry, "can you hear this, and refuse your ancient servant one request? Spare this man. Extinguish not such a light, because it is devious and wild."

"Rise—rise, De Lacy, and shame thee of thy petition," said the King. "Thy kinsman's blood—the blood of a noble Norman—is on the Welshman's hands and brow. As I am crowned king, he shall die ere it is wiped off. Here! have him to present execution!"

Cadwallon was instantly withdrawn under a guard. The Constable seemed, by action rather than words, to continue his intercession.

"Thou art mad, De Lacy—thou art mad, mine old and true friend, to urge me thus," said the King, compelling De Lacy to rise. "Seest thou not that my care in this matter is for thee? This Randal, by largesses and promises, hath made many friends, who will not, perhaps, easily again be

brought to your allegiance, returning, as thou dost, diminished in power and wealth. Had he lived, we might have had hard work to deprive him entirely of the power which he had acquired. We thank the Welsh assassin who hath rid us of him; but his adherents would cry foul play were the murderer spared. When blood is paid for blood, all will be forgotten, and their loyalty will once more flow in its proper channel to thee, their lawful lord."

Hugo de Lacy arose from his knees, and endeavored respectfully to combat the politic reasons of his wily sovereign, which he plainly saw were resorted to less for his sake than with the prudent purpose of effecting the change of feudal authority with the least possible trouble to the country or sovereign.

Henry listened to De Lacy's arguments patiently, and combated them with temper, until the death-drum began to beat and the castle bell to toll. He then led De Lacy to the window, on which, for it was now dark, a strong ruddy light began to gleam from without. A body of men-at-arms, each holding in his hand a blazing torch, were returning along the terrace from the execution of the wild but high-souled Briton, with cries of "Long live King Henry! and so perish all enemies of the gentle Norman men!"

CONCLUSION

A sun hath set—a star hath risen,
O, Geraldine! since arms of thine
Have been the lovely lady's prison.
COLERIDGE.

POPULAR fame had erred in assigning to Eveline Berenger, after the capture of her castle, any confinement more severe than that of her aunt the lady abbess of the Cistercians' convent afforded. Yet that was severe enough; for maiden aunts, whether abbesses or no, are not tolerant of the species of errors of which Eveline was accused; and the innocent damosel was brought in many ways to eat her bread in shame of countenance and bitterness of heart. Every day of her confinement was rendered less and less endurable by taunts, in the various forms of sympathy, consolation, and exhortation; but which, stripped of their assumed forms, were undisguised anger and insult. The company of Rose was all which Eveline had to sustain her under these inflictions, and that was at length withdrawn on the very morning when so many important events took place at the Garde Dolourreuse.

The unfortunate young lady inquired in vain of a grim-faced nun, who appeared in Rose's place to assist her to dress, why her companion and friend was debarred attendance. The nun observed on that score an obstinate silence, but threw out many hints on the importance attached to the vain ornaments of a frail child of clay, and on the hardship that even a spouse of Heaven was compelled to divert her thoughts from her higher duties, and condescend to fasten clasps and adjust veils.

The lady abbess, however, told her niece after matins, that her attendant had not been withdrawn from her for a space only, but was likely to be shut up in a house of the severest profession, for having afforded her mistress assistance in receiving Damian de Lacy into her sleeping apartment at the castle of Baldringham.

A soldier of De Lacy's band, who had hitherto kept what he had observed a secret, being off his post that night, had now in Damian's disgrace found he might benefit himself by

telling the story. This new blow, so unexpected, so afflictive—this new charge, which it was so difficult to explain, and so impossible utterly to deny, seemed to Eveline to seal Damian's fate and her own ; while the thought that she had involved in ruin her single-hearted and high-souled attendant was all that had been wanting to produce a state which approached to the apathy of despair. "Think of me what you will," she said to her aunt, "I will no longer defend myself ; say what you will, I will no longer reply ; carry me where you will, I will no longer resist. God will, in His good time, clear my fame—may He forgive my persecutors !"

After this, and during several hours of that unhappy day, the Lady Eveline, pale, cold, silent, glided from chapel to refectory, from refectory to chapel again, at the slightest beck of the abbess or her official sisters, and seemed to regard the various privations, penances, admonitions, and reproaches, of which she, in the course of that day, was subjected to an extraordinary share, no more than a marble statue minds the inclemency of the external air, or the raindrops which fall upon it, though they must in time waste and consume it.

The abbess, who loved her niece, although her affection showed itself often in a vexatious manner, became at length alarmed, countermanded her orders for removing Eveline to an inferior cell, attended herself to see her laid in bed (in which, as in everything else, the young lady seemed entirely passive), and, with something like reviving tenderness, kissed and blessed her on leaving the apartment. Slight as the mark of kindness was, it was unexpected, and, like the rod of Moses, opened the hidden fountains of waters. Eveline wept, a resource which had been that day denied to her ; she prayed ; and, finally, sobbed herself to sleep, like an infant, with a mind somewhat tranquilized by having given way to this tide of natural emotion.

She awoke more than once in the night to recall mingled and gloomy dreams of cells and of castles, of funerals and of bridals, of coronets and of racks and gibbets ; but towards morning she fell into sleep more sound than she had hitherto enjoyed, and her visions partook of its soothing character. The Lady of the Garde Doloureuse seemed to smile on her amid her dreams, and to promise her votaress protection. The shade of her father was there also ; and, with the boldness of a dreamer, she saw the paternal resemblance with awe, but without fear. His lips moved, and she heard words ; their import she did not fully comprehend, save that they

spoke of hope, consolation, and approaching happiness. There also glided in, with bright blue eyes fixed upon hers, dressed in a tunic of saffron-colored silk, with a mantle of cerulean blue of antique fashion, the form of a female, resplendent in that delicate species of beauty which attends the fairest complexion. It was, she thought, the Britoness Vanda; but her countenance was no longer resentful; her long yellow hair flew not loose on her shoulders, but was mysteriously braided with oak and mistletoe; above all, her right hand was gracefully disposed of under her mantle, and it was an unmutilated, unspotted, and beautifully formed hand which crossed the brow of Eveline. Yet, under these assurances of favor, a thrill of fear passed over her as the vision seemed to repeat or chant,

> "Widow'd wife and wedded maid,
> Betrothed, betrayer, and betray'd,
> All is done that has been said!
> Vanda's wrong has been ywroken;
> Take her pardon by this token."

She bent down as if to kiss Eveline, who started at that instant, and then awoke. Her hand was indeed gently pressed by one as pure and white as her own. The blue eyes and fair hair of a lovely female face, with half-veiled bosom and disheveled locks, flitted through her vision, and indeed its lips approached to those of the lovely sleeper at the moment of her awakening; but it was Rose in whose arms her mistress found herself pressed, and who moistened her face with tears, as in a passion of affection she covered it with kisses."

"What means this, Rose?" said Eveline; "thank God, you are restored to me! But what mean these bursts of weeping?"

"Let me weep—let me weep," said Rose; "it is long since I have wept for joy, and long, I trust, it will be ere I again weep for sorrow. News are come on the spur from the Garde Doloureuse. Amelot has brought them; he is at liberty, so is his master, and in high favor with Henry. Here yet more, but let me not tell it too hastily. You grow pale."

"No—no," said Eveline; "go on—go on, I think I understand you—I think I do."

"The villain Randal de Lacy, the master-mover of all our sorrows, will plague you no more: he was slain by an honest Welshman, and grieved am I that they have hanged the poor man for his good service. Above all, the stout old Constable

is himself returned from Palestine, as worthy, and somewhat wiser, than he was ; for it is thought he will renounce his contract with your ladyship."

"Silly girl," said Eveline, crimsoning as high as she had been before pale, "jest not amidst such a tale. But can this be reality ? Is Randal indeed slain, and the Constable returned ?"

These were hasty and hurried questions, answered as hastily and confusedly, and broken with ejaculations of surprise, and thanks to Heaven and to Our Lady, until the ecstasy of delight sobered down into a sort of tranquil wonder.

Meanwhile Damian Lacy also had his explanations to receive, and the mode in which they were conveyed had something remarkable. Damian had for some time been the inhabitant of what our age would have termed a dungeon, but which, in the ancient days, they called a prison. We are perhaps censurable in making the dwelling and the food of acknowledged and convicted guilt more comfortable and palatable than what the parties could have gained by any exertions when at large, and supporting themselves by honest labor ; but this is a venial error compared to that of our ancestors, who, considering a charge and a conviction as synonymous, treated the accused before sentence in a manner which would have been of itself a severe punishment after he was found guilty. Damian, therefore, notwithstanding his high birth and distinguished rank, was confined after the manner of the most atrocious criminal, was heavily fettered, fed on the coarsest food, and experienced only this alleviation, that he was permitted to indulge his misery in a solitary and separate cell, the wretched furniture of which was a mean bedstead, and a broken table and chair. A coffin—and his own arms and initials were painted upon it—stood in one corner, to remind him of his approaching fate ; and a crucifix was placed in another, to intimate to him that there was a world beyond that which must soon close upon him. No noise could penetrate into the iron silence of his prison—no rumor, either touching his own fate or that of his friends. Charged with being taken in open arms against the King, he was subject to military law, and to be put to death even without the formality of a hearing ; and he foresaw no milder conclusion to his imprisonment.

This melancholy dwelling had been the abode of Damian for nearly a month, when, strange as it may seem, his health,

which had suffered much from his wounds, began gradually to improve, either benefited by the abstemious diet to which he was reduced, or that certainty, however melancholy, is an evil better endured by many constitutions than the feverish contrast betwixt passion and duty. But the term of his imprisonment seemed drawing speedily to a close: his jailor, a sullen Saxon, of the lowest order, in more words than he had yet used to him, warned him to look to a speedy change of dwelling, and the tone in which he spoke convinced the prisoner there was no time to be lost. He demanded a confessor, and the jailer, though he withdrew without reply, seemed to intimate by his manner that the boon would be granted.

Next morning, at an unusually early hour, the chains and bolts of the cell were heard to clash and groan, and Damian was startled from a broken sleep, which he had not enjoyed for above two hours. His eyes were bent on the slowly-opening door, as if he had expected the headsman and his assistants; but the jailer ushered in a stout man in a pilgrim's habit.

"Is it a priest whom you bring me, warden?" said the unhappy prisoner.

"He can best answer the question himself," said the surly official, and presently withdrew.

The pilgrim remained standing on the floor, with his back to the small window, or rather loophole, by which the cell was imperfectly lighted, and gazed intently upon Damian, who was seated on the side of his bed, his pale cheek and disheveled hair bearing a melancholy correspondence to his heavy irons. He returned the pilgrim's gaze, but the imperfect light only showed him that his visitor was a stout old man, who wore the scallop-shell on his bonnet, as a token that he had passed the sea, and carried a palm-branch in his hand, to show he had visited the Holy Land.

"*Benedicite,* reverend father," said the unhappy young man. "Are you a priest come to unburden my conscience?"

"I am not a priest," replied the palmer, "but one who brings you news of discomfort."

"You bring them to one to whom comfort has been long a stranger, and to a place which perchance never knew it," replied Damian.

"I may be the bolder in my communication," said the palmer: "those in sorrow will better hear ill news than those whom they surprise in the possession of content and happiness."

"Yet even the situation of the wretched," said Damian, "can be rendered more wretched by suspense. I pray you, reverend sir, to speak the worst at once. If you come to announce the doom of this poor frame, may God be gracious to the spirit which must be violently dismissed from it!"

"I have no such charge," said the palmer. "I come from the Holy Land, and have the more grief in finding you thus, because my message to you was one addressed to a free man, and a wealthy one."

"For my freedom," said Damian, "let these fetters speak, and this apartment for my wealth. But speak out thy news; should my uncle, for I fear thy tale regards him, want either my arm or my fortune, this dungeon and my degradation have further pangs than I had yet supposed, as they render me unable to aid him."

"Your uncle, young man," said the palmer, "is prisoner—I should rather say slave—to the great Soldan, taken in a battle in which he did his duty, though unable to avert the defeat of the Christians, with which it was concluded. He was made prisoner while covering the retreat, but not until he had slain with his own hand, for his misfortune as it has proved, Hassan Ali, a favorite of the Soldan. The cruel pagan has caused the worthy knight to be loaded with irons heavier than those you wear, and the dungeon to which he is confined would make this seem a palace. The infidel's first resolution was to put the valiant Constable to the most dreadful death which his tormentors could devise. But fame told him that Hugo de Lacy was a man of great power and wealth, and he has demanded a ransom of ten thousand bezants of gold. Your uncle replied that "The payment would totally impoverish him, and oblige him to dispose of his whole estates; even then," he pleaded, "time must be allowed him to convert them into money." The Soldan replied, that "It imported little to him whether a hound like the Constable were fat or lean, and that he therefore insisted upon the full amount of the ransom." But he so far relaxed as to make it payable in three portions, on condition that, along with the first portion of the price, the nearest of kin and heir of De Lacy must be placed in his hands as a hostage for what remained due. On these conditions he consented your uncle should be put at liberty so soon as you arrive in Palestine with the gold."

"Now may I indeed call myself unhappy," said Damian, "that I cannot show my love and duty to my noble uncle, who hath ever been a father to me in my orphan state."

"It will be a heavy disappointment, doubtless, to the Constable," said the palmer, "because he was eager to return to this happy country to fulfil a contract of marriage which he had formed with a lady of great beauty and fortune."

Damian shrunk together in such sort that his fetters clashed, but he made no answer.

"Were he not your uncle," continued the pilgrim, "and well known as a wise man, I should think he is not quite prudent in this matter. Whatever he was before he left England, two summers spent in the wars of Palestine, and another amid the tortures and restraints of a heathen prison, have made him a sorry bridegoom."

"Peace, pilgrim," said De Lacy, with a commanding tone. "It is not thy part to censure such a noble knight as my uncle, nor is it meet that I should listen to your strictures."

"I crave your pardon, young man," said the palmer. "I spoke not without some view to your interest, which, methinks, does not so well consort with thine uncle having an heir of his body."

"Peace, base men!" said Damian. "By Heaven, I think worse of my cell then I did before, since its doors opened to such a counselor, and of my chains, since they restrain me from chastizing him. Depart, I pray thee,"

"Not till I have your answer for your uncle," answered the palmer. "My age scorns the anger of thy youth, as the rock despises the foam of the rivulet dashed against it."

"Then, say to my uncle," answered Damian, "I am a prisoner, or I would have come to him; I am a confiscated beggar, or I would have sent him my all."

"Such virtuous purposes are easily and boldly announced," said the palmer, "when he who speaks them knows that he cannot be called upon to make good the boast of his tongue. But could I tell thee of thy restoration to freedom and wealth, I trow thou wouldst consider twice ere thy act confirmed the sacrifice thou hast in thy present state promised so glibly."

"Leave me, I prithee, old man," said Damian; "thy thought cannot comprehend the tenor of mine—go, and add not to my distress insults which I have not the means to avenge."

"But what if I had it in my power to place thee in the situation of a free and wealthy man, would it please thee

then to be reminded of thy present boast; for if not, thou mayst rely on my discretion never to mention the difference of sentiment between Damian bound and Damian at liberty?"

"How meanest thou? or hast thou any meaning, save to torment me?" said the youth.

"Not so," seplied the old palmer, plucking from his bosom a parchment scroll to which a heavy seal was attached. "Know that thy cousin Randal hath been strangely slain, and his treacheries towards the Constable and thee as strangely discovered. The King, in requital of thy sufferings, hath sent thee this full pardon, and endowed thee with a third part of those ample estates, which, by his death, revert to the crown."

"And hath the King also restored my freedom and my right of blood?" exclaimed Damian.

From this moment, forthwith," said the palmer; "look upon the parchment—behold the royal hand and seal."

"I must have better proof. Here," he exclaimed, loudly clashing his irons at the same time—"here, thou Dogget—warder—son of a Saxon wolf-hound!"

The palmer, striking on the door, seconded the previous exertions for summoning the jailer, who entered accordingly.

"Warder," said Damian de Lacy, in a stern tone, "am I yet thy prisoner or no?"

The sullen jailer consulted the palmer by a look, and then answered to Damian that he was a free man.

"Then, death of thy heart, slave," said Damian, impatiently, "why hang these fetters on the free limbs of a Norman noble? Each moment they confine him are worth a lifetime of bondage to such a serf as thou!"

"They are soon rid of, Sir Damian," said the man; "and I pray you to take some patience, when you remember that ten minutes since you had little right to think these bracelets would have been removed for any other purpose than your progress to the scaffold."

"Peace, ban-dog," said Damian, "and be speedy! And thou, who hast brought me these good tidings, I forgive thy former bearing: thou thoughtest, doubtless, that it was prudent to extort from me professions during my bondage which might in honor decide my conduct when at large. The suspicion inferred in it somewhat offensive, but thy motive was to ensure my uncle's liberty."

"And is it really your purpose," said the palmer, "to

employ your newly-gained freedom in a voyage to Syria, and to exchange your English prison for the dungeon of the Soldan?"

"If thou thyself wilt act as my guide," answered the undaunted youth, "you shall not say I dally by the way."

"And the ransom," said the palmer, "how is that to be provided?"

"How, but from the estates, which, nominally restored to me, remain in truth and justice my uncle's, and must be applied to his use in the first instance? If I mistake not greatly, there is not a Jew or Lombard who would not advance the necessary sums on such security. Therefore, dog," he continued, addressing the jailer, "hasten thy unclenching and undoing of rivets, and be not dainty of giving me a little pain, so thou break no limb, for I cannot afford to be stayed on my journey."

The palmer looked on a little while, as if surprised at Damian's determination, then exclaimed, "I can keep the old man's secret no longer; such high-souled generosity must not be sacrificed. Hark thee, brave Sir Damian, I have a mighty secret still to impart, and as this Saxon churl understands no French, this is no unfit opportunity to communicate it. Know that thine uncle is a changed man in mind, as he is debilitated and broken down in body. Peevishness and jealousy have possessed themselves of a heart which was once strong and generous; his life is now on the dregs, and, I grieve to speak it, these dregs are foul and bitter."

"Is this thy mighty secret?" said Damian. "That men grow old, I know; and if with infirmity of body comes infirmity of temper and mind, their case the more strongly claims the dutiful observance of those who are bound to them in blood or affection."

"Ay," replied the pilgrim, "but the Constable's mind has been poisoned against thee by rumors which have reached his ear from England, that there have been thoughts of affection betwixt thee and his betrothed bride, Eveline Berenger. Ha! have I touched you now?"

"Not a whit," said Damian, putting on the strongest resolution with which his virtue could supply him; "it was but this fellow who struck my shin-bone somewhat sharply with his hammer. Proceed. My uncle heard such a report, and believed it?"

"He did," said the palmer; "I can well aver it, since he concealed no thought from me. But he prayed me care-

fully to hide his suspicions from you. 'Otherwise,' said he, 'the young wolf-cub will never thrust himself into the trap for the deliverance of the old he-wolf. Were he once in my prison-house,' your uncle continued to speak of you, 'he should rot and die ere I sent one penny of ransom to set at liberty the lover of my betrothed bride.'"

"Could this be my uncle's sincere purpose?" said Damian, all aghast. "Could he plan so much treachery towards me as to leave me in the captivity into which I threw myself for his redemption? Tush! it cannot be."

"Flatter not yourself with such a vain opinion," said the palmer: "if you go to Syria, you go to eternal captivity, while your uncle returns to possession of wealth little diminished—and of Eveline Berenger."

"Ha!" ejaculated Damian; and, looking down for an instant, demanded of the palmer, in a subdued voice, what he would have him to do in such an extremity.

"The case is plain, according to my poor judgment," replied the palmer. "No one is bound to faith with those who mean to observe none with him. Anticipate this treachery of your uncle, and let his now short and infirm existence molder out in the pestiferous cell to which he would condemn your youthful strength. The royal grant has assigned you lands enough for your honorable support; and wherefore not unite with them those of the Garde Doloureuse? Eveline Berenger, if I do not greatly mistake, will scarcely say 'nay.' Ay, more—I vouch it on my soul that she will say 'yes,' for I have sure information of her mind; and for her pre-contract, a word from Henry to His Holiness, now that they are in the heyday of their reconciliation, will obliterate the name 'Hugo' from the parchment, and insert 'Damian' in its stead."

"Now, by my faith," said Damian, arising and placing his foot upon the stool, that the warder might more easily strike off the last ring by which he was encumbered, "I have heard of such things as this—I have heard of beings who, with seeming gravity of word and aspect, with subtle counsels, artfully applied to the frailties of human nature, have haunted the cells of despairing men, and made them many a fair promise, if they would but exchange for their by-ways the paths of salvation. Such are the fiend's dearest agents, and in such a guise hath the fiend himself been known to appear. In the name of God, old man, if human thou art, begone! I like not thy words or thy presence—I spit at thy counsels. And mark me," he added, with a

menacing gesture, "look to thine own safety; I shall presently be at liberty!"

"Boy," replied the palmer, folding his arms contemptuously in his cloak, "I scorn thy menaces; I leave thee not till we know each other better."

"I too," said Damian, "would fain know whether thou be'st man or fiend; and now for the trial." As he spoke, the last shackle fell from his leg and clashed on the pavement, and at the same moment he sprung on the palmer, caught him by the waist, and exclaimed, as he made three distinct and desperate attempts to lift him up and dash him headlong to the earth, "This for maligning a nobleman, this for doubting the honor of a knight, and this (with a yet more violent exertion) for belying a lady!"

Each effort of Damian seemed equal to have rooted up a tree; yet, though they staggered the old man, they overthrew him not; and while Damian panted with his last exertion, he replied, "And take thou this, for so roughly entreating thy father's brother."

As he spoke, Damian de Lacy, the best youthful wrestler in Cheshire, received no soft fall on the floor of the dungeon. He arose slowly and astounded; but the palmer had now thrown back both hood and dalmatique, and the features, though bearing marks of age and climate, were those of his uncle the Constable, who calmly observed, "I think, Damian, thou art become stronger, or I weaker, since my breast was last pressed against yours in our country's celebarted sport. Thou hadst nigh had me down in that last turn, but that I knew the old De Lacy's back-trip as well as thou. But wherefore kneel, man?" He raised him with much kindness, kissed his cheek, and proceeded—"Think not, my dearest nephew, that I meant in my late disguise to try your faith, which I myself never doubted. But evil tongues had been busy, and it was this which made me resolve on an experiment, the result of which has been, as I expected, most honorable for you. And know—for these walls have sometimes ears, even according to the letter—there are ears and eyes not far distant which have heard and seen the whole. Marry, I wish, though, thy last hug had not been so severe a one. My ribs still feel the impression of thy knuckles."

"Dearest and honored uncle," said Damian, "excuse ——"

"There is nothing to excuse," replied his uncle, interrupting him. "Have we not wrestled a turn before now?

But there remains yet one trial for thee to go through. Get thee out of this hole speedily; don thy best array to accompany me to the church at noon; for, Damian, thou must be present at the marriage of the Lady Eveline Berenger."

This proposal at once struck to the earth the unhappy young man. "For mercy's sake," he exclaimed, "hold me excused in this, my gracious uncle! I have been of late severely wounded, and am very weak."

"As my bones can testify," said his uncle. "Why, man, thou hast the strength of a Norway bear."

"Passion," answered Damian, "might give me strength for a moment; but, dearest uncle, ask anything of me rather than this. Methinks, if I have been faulty, some other punishment might suffice."

"I tell thee," said the Constable, "thy presence is necessary—indispensably necessary. Strange reports have been abroad, which thy absence on this occasion would go far to confirm. Eveline's character and mine own are concerned in this."

"If so," said Damien—"if it be indeed so, no task will be too hard for me. But I trust, when the ceremony is over, you will not refuse me your consent to take the cross, unless you should prefer my joining the troops destined, as I heard, for the conquest of Ireland."

"Ay—ay," said the Constable; "if Eveline grant you permission, I will not withhold mine."

"Uncle," said Damian, somewhat sternly, "you do not know the feelings which you jest with."

"Nay," said the Constable, "I compel nothing; for, if thou goest to the church and likest not the match, thou may'st put a stop to it if thou wilt: the sacrament cannot proceed without the bridegroom's consent."

"I understand you not, uncle," said Damian; "you have already consented."

"Yes, Damian," he said, "I have—to withdraw my claim, and to relinquish it in thy favor; for if Eveline Berenger is wedded to-day, thou art her bridegroom. The church has given her sanction, the King his approbation, the lady says not 'nay,' and the question only now remains, whether the bridegroom will say 'yes.'"

The nature of the answer may be easily conceived; nor is it necessary to dwell upon the splendor of the ceremonial, which, to atone for his late unmerited severity, Henry honored with his own presence. Amelot and Rose were shortly afterwards united, old Flammock having been previously

created a gentleman of coat armor, that the gentle Norman blood might, without utter derogation, mingle with the meaner stream which colored the cheek in crimson, and meandered in azure over the lovely neck and bosom of the fair Fleming. There was nothing in the manner of the Constable towards his nephew and his bride which could infer a regret of the generous self-denial which he had exercised in favor of their youthful passion ; but he soon after accepted a high command in the troops destined to invade Ireland, and his name is found among the highest in the roll of the chivalrous Normans who first united that fair island to the English crown.

Eveline, restored to her own fair castle and domains, failed not to provide for her confessor, as well as for her old soldiers, servants and retainers, forgetting their errors and remembering their fidelity. The confessor was restored to the flesh-pots of Egypt, more congenial to his habits than the meager fare of his convent. Even Gillian had the means of subsistence, since to punish her would have been to distress the faithful Raoul. They quarreled for the future part of their lives in plenty, just as they had formerly quarreled in poverty ; for wrangling curs will fight over a banquet as fiercely as over a bare bone. Raoul died first, and Gillian, having lost her whetstone, found that as her youthful looks decayed her wit turned somewhat blunt. She therefore prudently commenced devotee, and spent hours in long panegyrics on her departed husband.

The only serious cause of vexation which I can trace the Lady Eveline having been tried with arose from a visit of her Saxon relative, made with much form, but, unfortunately, at the very time which the lady abbess had selected for that same purpose. The discord which arose between these honored personages was of a double character, for they were Norman and Saxon, and, moreover, differed in opinion concerning the time of holding Easter. This, however, was but a slight gale to disturb the general serenity of Eveline ; for with her unhoped-for union with Damian ended the trials and sorrows of THE BETROTHED.

END OF THE BETROTHED.

CHRONICLES OF THE CANONGATE

First Series

INTRODUCTION

TO

CHRONICLES OF THE CANONGATE

Sic itur ad astra.

THE preceding volume * of this collection concluded the last of the pieces originally published under the *nominis umbra* of the Author of *Waverley;* and the circumstances which rendered it impossible for the writer to continue longer in the possession of his incognito were communicated, in 1827, in the Introduction to the First Series of *Chronicles of the Canongate*, consisting, besides a biographical sketch of the imaginary chronicler, of three tales, entitled, *The Highland Widow, The Two Drovers,* † and *The Surgeon's Daughter.* In the present volume the first named of these pieces is included, together with three detached stories, ‡ which appeared the year after in the elegant compilation called *The Keepsake. The Surgeon's Daughter* it is thought better to defer until a succeeding volume § than to

Begin and break off in the middle.

I have, perhaps, said enough on former occasions of the misfortunes which led to the dropping of that mask under which I had, for a long series of years, enjoyed so large a portion of public favor. Through the success of those literary efforts I had been enabled to indulge most of the tastes which a retired person of my station might be supposed to entertain. In the pen of this nameless romancer I seemed to possess something like the secret fountain of coined gold and pearls vouchsafed to the traveler of the

* [*Woodstock*, according to the chronological order of original publication.]

† [Printed in the present edition along with *The Talisman*, vol. xx.]

‡ [In the present edition printed along with *The Talisman*, vol. xx.] § [See vol. xxv.]

Eastern tale; and no doubt believed that I might venture, without silly imprudence, to extend my personal expenditure considerably beyond what I should have thought of had my means been limited to the competence which I derived from inheritance, with the moderate income of a professional situation. I bought, and built, and planted, and was considered by myself, as by the rest of the world, in the safe possession of an easy fortune. My riches, however, like the other riches of this world, were liable to accidents, under which they were ultimately destined to make unto themselves wings and fly away. The year 1825, so disastrous to many branches of industry and commerce, did not spare the market of literature; and the sudden ruin that fell on so many of the booksellers could scarcely have been expected to leave unscathed one whose career had of necessity connected him deeply and extensively with the pecuniary transactions of that profession. In a word, almost without one note of premonition, I found myself involved in the sweeping catastrophe of the unhappy time, and called on to meet the demands of creditors upon commercial establishments with which my fortunes had long been bound up, to the extent of no less a sum than one hundred and twenty thousand pounds.

The Author having, however rashly, committed his pledges thus largely to the hazards of trading companies, it behoved him, of course, to abide the consequences of his conduct, and, with whatever feelings, he surrendered on the instant every shred of property which he had been accustomed to call his own. It became vested in the hands of gentlemen, whose integrity, prudence, and intelligence were combined with all possible liberality and kindness of disposition, and who readily afforded every assistance towards the execution of plans in the success of which the Author contemplated the possibility of his ultimate extrication, and which were of such a nature that, had assistance of this sort been withheld, he could have had little prospect of carrying them into effect. Among other resources which occurred was the project of that complete and corrected edition of his novels and romances (whose real parentage had of necessity been disclosed at the moment of the commercial convulsions alluded to), which has now advanced with unprecedented favor nearly to its close; but as he purposed also to continue, for the behoof of those to whom he was indebted, the exercise of his pen in the same path of literature, so long as the taste of his countrymen should seem to approve of his efforts, it

appeared to him that it would have been an idle piece of affectation to attempt getting up a new incognito, after his original visor had been thus dashed from his brow. Hence the personal narrative prefixed to the first work of fiction which he put forth after the paternity of the Waverley Novels had come to be publicly ascertained ; and though many of the particulars originally avowed in that notice have been unavoidably adverted to in the prefaces and notes to some of the preceding volumes of the present collection, it is now reprinted as it stood at the time, because some interest is generally attached to a coin or medal struck on a special occasion, as expressing, perhaps, more faithfully than the same artist could have afterwards conveyed the feelings of the moment that gave it birth.

The Introduction to the First Series of *Chronicles of the Canongate* [1827] ran, then, in these words :

All who are acquainted with the early history of the Italian stage are aware that *arlechino* is not, in his original conception, a mere worker of marvels with his wooden sword, a jumper in and out of windows, as upon our theater, but, as his parti-colored jacket implies, a buffoon or clown, whose mouth, far from being eternally closed, as amongst us, is filled, like that of Touchstone, with quips, and cranks, and witty devices, very often delivered extempore. It is not easy to trace how he became possessed of his black vizard, which was anciently made in the resemblance of the face of a cat ; but it seems that the mask was essential to the performance of the character, as will appear from the following theatrical anecdote :—

An actor on the Italian stage permitted at the *foire du St. Germain,* in Paris, was renowned for the wild, venturous, and extravagant wit, the brilliant sallies and fortunate repartees, with which he prodigally seasoned the character of the parti-colored jester. Some critics, whose good-will towards a favorite performer was stronger than their judgment, took occasion to remonstrate with the successful actor on the subject of the grotesque vizard. They went wilily to their purpose, observing, that his classical and Attic wit, his delicate vein of humor, his happy turn for dialogue, were rendered burlesque and ludicrous by this unmeaning and bizarre disguise, and that those attributes would become far more impressive if aided by the spirit of his eye and the expression of his natural features. The actor's vanity was easily so far engaged as to induce him to make the experi-

ment. He played harlequin barefaced, but was considered on all hands as having made a total failure. He had lost the audacity which a sense of incognito bestowed, and with it all the reckless play of raillery which gave vivacity to his original acting. He cursed his advisers, and resumed his grotesque vizard; but, it is said, without ever being able to regain the careless and successful levity which the consciousness of the disguise had formerly bestowed.

Perhaps the Author of *Waverley* is now about to incur a risk of the same kind, and endanger his popularity by having laid aside his incognito. It is certainly not a voluntary experiment, like that of harlequin; for it was my original intention never to have avowed these works during my lifetime, and the original manuscripts were carefully preserved, though by the care of others rather than mine, with the purpose of supplying the necessary evidence of the truth when the period of announcing it should arrive.* But the affairs of my publishers having unfortunately passed into a management different from their own, I had no right any longer to rely upon secrecy in that quarter; and thus my mask, like my Aunt Dinah's in *Tristram Shandy*, having begun to wax a little threadbare about the chin, it became time to lay it aside with a good grace, unless I desired it should fall in pieces from my face, which was now become likely.

Yet I had not the slightest intention of selecting the time and place in which the disclosure was finally made; nor was there any concert betwixt my learned and respected friend Lord Meadowbank † and myself upon that occasion. It was, as the reader is probably aware, upon the 23d February last [1827], at a public meeting, called for establishing a professional Theatrical Fund in Edinburgh, that the communication took place. ‡ Just before we sat down to table, Lord Meadowbank asked me privately whether I was still anxious to preserve my incognito on the subject of what were called the Waverely Novels? I did not immediately see the purpose of his lordship's question, although I certainly might have been led to infer it, and replied that the secret had now of necessity become known to so many people that I was indifferent on the subject. Lord Meadow-

* These manuscripts are at present (August 1831) advertised for public sale, which is an addition, though a small one, to other annoyances.

† One of the Supreme Judges of Scotland, termed Lords of Council and Session. ‡ See Appendix.

bank was thus induced, while doing me the great honor of proposing my health to the meeting, to say something on the subject of these Novels, so strongly connecting them with me as the author, that, by remaining silent, I must have stood convicted, either of the actual paternity, or of the still greater crime of being supposed willing to receive indirectly praise to which I had no just title. I thus found myself suddenly and unexpectedly placed in the confessional, and had only time to recollect that I had been guided thither by a most friendly hand, and could not, perhaps, find a better public opportunity to lay down a disguise which began to resemble that of a detected masquerader. I had therefore the task of avowing myself, to the numerous and respectable company assembled, as the sole and unaided author of these Novels of Waverley, the paternity of which was likely at one time to have formed a controversy of some celebrity, for the ingenuity with which some instructors of the public gave their assurance on the subject was extremely persevering.

I now think it further necessary to say, that, while I take on myself all the merits and demerits attending these compositions, I am bound to acknowledge with gratitude hints of subjects and legends which I have received from various quarters, and have occasionally used as a foundation of my fictitious compositions, or woven up with them in the shape of episodes. I am bound, in particular, to acknowledge the unremitting kindness of Mr. Joseph Train, supervisor of excise at Dumfries, to whose unwearied industry I have been indebted for many curious traditions and points of antiquarian interest. It was Mr. Train, who brought to my recollection the history of Old Mortality, although I myself had had a personal interview with that celebrated wanderer so far back as about 1792, when I found him on his usual task. He was then engaged in repairing the gravestones of the Covenanters who had died while imprisoned in the Castle of Dunnottar, to which many of them were committed prisoners at the period of Argyle's rising; their place of confinement is still called the Whigs' Vault. Mr. Train, however, procured for me far more extensive information concerning this singular person, whose name was Paterson, than I had been able to acquire during my own short conversation with him.* He was, as I think I have somewhere already stated, a native of the parish of Closeburn, in Dumfriesshire, and it is be-

* See, for some further particulars, the notes to *Old Mortality*.

lieved that domestic affliction, as well as devotional feeling, induced him to commence the wandering mode of life which he pursued for a very long period. It is more than twenty years since Robert Paterson's death, which took place on the highroad near Lockerby, where he was found exhausted and expiring. The white pony, the companion of his pilgrimage, was standing by the side of its dying master, the whole furnishing a scene not unfitted for the pencil. These particulars I had from Mr. Train.

Another debt, which I pay most willingly, I owe to an unknown correspondent, a lady,* who favored me with the history of the upright and high-principled female whom, in in *The Heart of Midlothian*, I have termed Jeanie Deans. The circumstance of her refusing to save her sister's life by an act of perjury, and undertaking a pilgrimage to London to obtain her pardon, are both represented as true by my fair and obliging correspondent; and they led me to consider the possibility of rendering a fictitious personage interesting by mere dignity of mind and rectitude of principle, assisted by unpretending good sense and temper, without any of the beauty, grace, talent, accomplishment, and wit to which a heroine of romance is supposed to have a prescriptive right. If the portrait was received with interest by the public, I am conscious how much it was owing to the truth and force of the original sketch, which I regret that I am unable to present to the public, as it was written with much feeling and spirit.

Old and odd books, and a considerable collection of family legends, formed another quarry, so ample, that it was much more likely that the strength of the laborer should be exhausted than that materials should fail. I may mention, for example's sake, that the terrible catastrophe of *The Bride of Lammermoor* actually occurred in a Scottish family of rank. The female relative, by whom the melancholy tale was communicated to me many years since, was a near connection of the family in which the event happened, and always told it with an appearance of melancholy mystery, which enhanced the interest. She had known, in her youth, the brother who rode before the unhappy victim to the fatal altar, who, though then a mere boy, and occupied almost entirely with the gaiety of his own appearance in the bridal procession, could not but remark that the hand of his sister was moist, and cold as that of a statue. It is unnecessary

* The late Mrs. Goldie.

further to withdraw the veil from this scene of family distress, nor, although it occurred more than a hundred years since, might it be altogether agreeable to the representatives of the families concerned in the narrative. It may be proper to say, that the events alone are imitated ; but I had neither the means nor intention of copying the manners, or tracing the characters, of the persons concerned in the real story.

Indeed, I may here state generally, that, although I have deemed historical personages free subjects of delineation, I have never on any occasion violated the respect due to private life. It was indeed impossible that traits proper to persons, both living and dead, with whom I have had intercourse in society, should not have risen to my pen in such works as *Waverley* and those which followed it. But I have always studied to generalize the portraits, so that they should still seem, on the whole, the productions of fancy, though possessing some resemblance to real individuals. Yet I must own my attempts have not in this last particular been uniformly successful. There are men whose characters are so peculiarly marked, that the delineation of some leading and principal feature inevitably places the whole person before you in his individuality. Thus, the character of Jonathan Oldbuck, in *The Antiquary*, was partly founded on that of an old friend of my youth, to whom I am indebted for introducing me to Shakspeare, and other invaluable favors ; but I thought I had so completely disguised the likeness that his features could not be recognized by any one now alive. I was mistaken, however, and indeed had endangered what I desired should be considered as a secret ; for I afterwards learned that a highly respectable gentleman, one of the few surviving friends of my father,* and an acute critic, had said, upon the appearance of the work, that he was now convinced who was the author of it, as he recognized, in the Antiquary of Monkbarns, traces of the character of a very intimate friend of my father's family.

I may here also notice, that the sort of exchange of gallantry which is represented as taking place betwixt the baron of Bradwardine [Waverley] and Colonel Talbot is a literal fact. The real circumstances of the anecdote, alike honorable to Whig and Tory, are these :—

Alexander Stewart of Invernahyle—a name which I can-

* James Chalmers, Esq., solicitor-at-law, London, who died during the publication of the collected Edition of these novels. (Aug. 1831.)

not write without the warmest recollections of gratitude to the friend of my childhood, who first introduced me to the Highlands, their traditions and their manners—had been engaged actively in the troubles of 1745. As he charged at the battle of Preston with his clan, the Stewarts of Appine, he saw an officer of the opposite army standing alone by a battery of four cannon, of which he discharged three on the advancing Highlanders, and then drew his sword. Invernahyle rushed on him, and required him to surrender. "Never to rebels!" was the undaunted reply, accompanied with a lunge, which the Highlander received on his target; but instead of using his sword in cutting down his now defenseless antagonist, he employed it in parrying the blow of a Lochaber ax, aimed at the officer by the miller, one of his own followers, a grim-looking old Highlander, whom I remember to have seen. Thus, overpowered, Lieutenant-Colonel Allan Whitefoord, a gentleman of rank and consequence, as well as a brave officer, gave up his sword, and with it his purse and watch, which Invernahyle accepted, to save them from his followers. After the affair was over, Mr. Stewart sought out his prisoner, as they were introduced to each other by the celebrated John Roy Stewart, who acquainted Colonel Whitefoord with the quality of his captor, and made him aware of the necessity of receiving back his property, which he was inclined to leave in the hands into which it had fallen. So great became the confidence established betwixt them, that Invernahyle obtained from the Chevalier his prisoner's freedom upon parole; and soon afterwards, having been sent back to the Highlands to raise men, he visited Colonel Whitefoord at his own house, and spent two happy days with him and his Whig friends, without thinking, on either side, of the civil war which was then raging.

When the battle of Culloden put an end to the hopes of Charles Edward, Invernahyle, wounded and unable to move, was borne from the field by the faithful zeal of his retainers. But, as he had been a distinguished Jacobite, his family and property were exposed to the system of vindictive destruction too generally carried into execution through the country of the insurgents. It was now Colonel Whitefoord's turn to exert himself, and he wearied all the authorities, civil and military, with his solicitations for pardon to the saver of his life, or at least for a protection for his wife and family. His applications were for a long time unsuccessful. "I was found with the mark of the beast upon me in every list,"

was Invernahyle's expression. At length Colonel Whitefoord applied to the Duke of Cumberland, and urged his suit with every argument which he could think of. Being still repulsed, he took his commission from his bosom, and, having said something of his own and his family's exertions in the cause of the house of Hanover, begged to resign his situation in their service, since he could not be permitted to show his gratitude to the person to whom he owed his life. The Duke, struck with his earnestness, desired him to take up his commission, and granted the protection required for the family of Invernahyle.

The chieftain himself lay concealed in a cave near his own house, before which a small body of regular soldiers were encamped. He could hear their muster-roll called every morning, and their drums beat to quarters at night, and not a change of the sentinels escaped him. As it was suspected that he was lurking somewhere on the property, his family were closely watched, and compelled to use the utmost precaution in supplying him with food. One of his daughters, a child of eight or ten years old, was employed as the agent least likely to be suspected. She was an instance among others, that a time of danger and difficulty creates a premature sharpness of intellect. She made herself acquainted among the soldiers, till she became so familiar to them that her motions escaped their notice; and her practise was to stroll away into the neighborhood of the cave, and leave what slender supply of food she carried for that purpose under some remarkable stone, or the root of some tree, where her father might find it as he crept by night from his lurking-place. Times became milder, and my excellent friend was relieved from proscription by the Act of Indemnity. Such is the interesting story which I have rather injured than improved by the manner in which it is told in *Waverley*.

This incident, with several other circumstances illustrating the Tales in question, was communicated by me to my late lamented friend, William Erskine, a Scottish judge, by the title of Lord Kinedder, who afterwards reviewed with far too much partiality the *Tales of my Landlord* for the *Quarterly Review* of January 1817.* In the same article are contained other illustrations of the Novels, with which I supplied my accomplished friend, who took the trouble to write the review. The reader who is desirous of such

* Lord Kinedder died in August 1822. Eheu! (Aug. 1831.)

information will find the original of Meg Merrilies, and I believe of one or two other personages of the same cast of character, in the article referred to.

I may also mention, that the tragic and savage circumstances which are represented as preceding the birth of Allan M'Aulay, in *The Legend of Montrose*, really happened in the family of Stewart of Ardvoirlich. The wager about the candlesticks, whose place was supplied by Highland torch-bearers, was laid and won by one of the MacDonalds of Keppoch.

There can be but little amusement in winnowing out the few grains of truth which are contained in this mass of empty fiction. I may, however, before dismissing the subject, allude to the various localities which have been affixed to some of the scenery introduced into these novels, by which, for example, Wolf's Hope is identified with Fast Castle in Berwickshire, Tillietudlem with Draphane in Clydesdale, and the valley in *The Monastery*, called Glendearg, with the dale of the river Allan, above Lord Somerville's villa, near Melrose. I can only say that, in these and other instances, I had no purpose of describing any particular local spot; and the resemblance must therefore be of that general kind which necessarily exists between scenes of the same character. The iron-bound coast of Scotland affords upon its headlands and promontories fifty such castles as Wolf's Hope; every county has a valley more or less resembling Glendearg; and if castles like Tillietudlem, or mansions like the Baron of Bradwardine's, are now less frequently to be met with, it is owing to the rage of indiscriminate destruction, which has removed or ruined so many monuments of antiquity, when they were not protected by their inaccessible situation.*

The scraps of poetry which have been in most cases tacked to the beginning of chapters in these novels are sometimes quoted either from reading or from memory, but, in the general case, are pure invention. I found it too troublesome to turn to the collection of the British poets to discover apposite mottoes, and, in the situation of the theatrical mechanist, who, when the white paper which represented his shower of snow was exhausted, continued the storm by snowing brown, I drew on my memory as long as I could,

* I would particularly intimate the Kaim of Urie, on the eastern coast of Scotland, as having suggested an idea for the tower called Wolf's Crag, which the public more generally identified with the ancient tower of Fast Castle.

and, when that failed, eked it out with invention. I believe that, in some cases, where actual names are affixed to the supposed quotations, it would be to little purpose to seek them in the works of the authors referred to. In some cases I have been entertained when Dr. Watts and other graver authors have been ransacked in vain for stanzas for which the novelist alone was responsible.

And now the reader may expect me, while in the confessional, to explain the motives why I have so long persisted in disclaiming the works of which I am now writing. To this it would be difficult to give any other reply save that of Corporal Nym: it was the Author's humor or caprice for the time. I hope it will not be construed into ingratitude to the public, to whose indulgence I have owed my *sang froid* much more than to any merit of my own, if I confess that I am, and have been, more indifferent to success, or to failure, as an author than may be the case with others, who feel more strongly the passion for literary fame, probably because they are justly conscious of a better title to it. It was not until I had attained the age of thirty years that I made any serious attempt at distinguishing myself as an author; and at that period men's hopes, desires, and wishes have usually acquired something of a decisive character, and are not eagerly and easily diverted into a new channel. When I made the discovery—for to me it was one—that by amusing myself with composition, which I felt a delightful occupation, I could also give pleasure to others, and became aware that literary pursuits were likely to engage in future a considerable portion of my time, I felt some alarm that I might acquire those habits of jealousy and fretfulness which have lessened, and even degraded, the character even of great authors, and rendered them, by their petty squabbles and mutual irritability, the laughing-stock of the people of the world. I resolved, therefore, in this respect to guard my breast, perhaps an unfriendly critic may add, my brow, with triple brass,* and as much as possible to avoid resting my thoughts and wishes upon literary success, lest I should endanger my own peace of mind and tranquillity by literary failure. It would argue either stupid apathy or ridiculous affectation to say that I have been insensible to the public applause, when I have been honored with its testimonies; and still more highly do I prize the invaluable friendships which some temporary

* Not altogether impossible, when it is considered that I have been at the bar since 1792. (Aug. 1831.)

popularity has enabled me to form among those of my contemporaries most distinguished by talents and genius, and which I venture to hope now rest upon a basis more firm than the circumstances which gave rise to them. Yet feeling all these advantages as a man ought to do, and must do, I may say, with truth and confidence, that I have, I think, tasted of the intoxicating cup with moderation, and that I have never, either in conversation or correspondence, encouraged discussions respecting my own literary pursuits. On the contrary, I have usually found such topics, even when introduced from motives most flattering to myself, rather embarrassing and disagreeable.

I have now frankly told my motives for concealment, so far as I am conscious of having any, and the public will forgive the egotism of the detail as what is necessarily connected with it. The author, so long and loudly called for, has appeared on the stage and made his obeisance to the audience. Thus far his conduct is a mark of respect. To linger in their presence would be intrusion.

I have only to repeat that I avow myself in print, as formerly in words, the sole and unassisted author of all the novels published as works of the "Author of *Waverley*." I do this without shame, for I am unconscious that there is anything in their composition which deserves reproach, either on the score of religion or morality, and without any feeling of exultation, because, whatever may have been their temporary success, I am well aware how much their reputation depends upon the caprice of fashion; and I have already mentioned the precarious tenure by which it is held as a reason for displaying no great avidity in grasping at the possession.

I ought to mention, before concluding, that twenty persons, at least, were, either from intimacy or from the confidence which circumstances rendered necessary, participant of this secret; and as there was no instance, to my knowledge, of any one of the number breaking faith, I am the more obliged to them, because the slight and trivial character of the mystery was not qualified to inspire much respect in those entrusted with it. Nevertheless, like Jack the Giant-Killer, I was fully confident in the advantage of my "coat of darkness," and had it not been from compulsory circumstances, I would have indeed been very cautious how I parted with it.

As for the work which follows, it was meditated, and in part printed, long before the avowal of the novels took place,

and originally commenced with a declaration that it was neither to have introduction nor preface of any kind. This long proem, prefixed to a work intended not to have any, may, however, serve to show how human purposes, in the most trifling as well as the most important affairs, are liable to be controlled by the course of events. Thus, we begin to cross a strong river with our eyes and our resolution fixed on that point of the opposite shore on which we purpose to land ; but, gradually giving way to the torrent, are glad, by the aid perhaps of branch or bush, to extricate ourselves at some distant, and perhaps dangerous, landing-place, much farther down the stream than that on which we had fixed our intentions.

Hoping that the courteous reader will afford to a known and familiar acquaintance some portion of the favor which he extended to a disguised candidate for his applause, I beg leave to subscribe myself his obliged humble servant,

WALTER SCOTT.

ABBOTSFORD, *October* 1, 1827.

Such was the little narrative which I thought proper to put forth in October 1827, nor have I much to add to it now. About to appear for the first time in my own name in this department of letters, it occurred to me that something in the shape of a periodical publication might carry with it a certain air of novelty, and I was willing to break, if I may so express it, the abruptness of my personal forthcoming by investing an imaginary coadjutor with at least as much distinctness of individual existence as I had ever previously thought it worth while to bestow on shadows of the same convenient tribe. Of course, it had never been in my contemplation to invite the assistance of any real person in the sustaining of my quasi-editorial character and labors. It had long been my opinion that anything like a literary picnic is likely to end in suggesting comparisons, justly termed odious, and therefore to be avoided ; and, indeed I had also had some occasion to know that promises of assistance, in efforts of that order, are apt to be more magnificent than the subsequent performance. I therefore planned a miscellany, to be independent, after the old fashion, on my own resources alone, and although conscious enough that the moment which assigned to the Author of *Waverley* "a local habitation and a name" had seriously endangered his spell, I felt inclined to adopt the sentiment of my old hero Montrose, and to say to myself, that in literature, as in war,

He either fears his fate too much,
Or his deserts are small,
Who dares not put it to the touch,
To win or lose it all.

To the particulars explanatory of the plan of these Chronicles, which the reader is presented with in chapter ii. by the imaginary editor, Mr. Croftangry, I have now to add, that the lady, termed in his narrative Mrs. Bethune Baliol, was designed to shadow out in its leading points the interesting character of a dear friend of mine, Mrs. Murray Keith,* whose death occurring shortly before had saddened a wide circle much attached to her, as well for her genuine virtue and amiable qualities of disposition as for the extent of information which she possessed, and the delightful manner in which she was used to communicate it. In truth, the Author had, on many occasions, been indebted to her vivid memory for the *substratum* of his Scottish fictions; and she accordingly had been, from an early period, at no loss to fix the Waverley novels on the right culprit.

In the sketch of Chrystal Croftangry's own history, the Author has been accused of introducing some not polite allusions to respectable living individuals; but he may safely, he presumes, pass over such an insinuation. The first of the narratives which Mr. Croftangry proceeds to lay before the public, *The Highland Widow*, was derived from Mrs. Murray Keith,† and is given, with the exception of a few additional circumstances—the introduction of which I am rather inclined to regret—very much as the excellent old lady used to tell the story. Neither the Highland cicerone MacTurk [MacLeish] nor the demure waiting-woman were drawn from imagination; and on re-reading my tale, after the lapse of a few years, and comparing its effect with my remembrance of my worthy friend's oral narration, which was certainly extremely affecting, I cannot but suspect myself of having marred its simplicity by some of those interpolations which, at the time when I penned them, no doubt passed with myself for embellishments.

The next tale, entitled *The Two Drovers*, I learned from another old friend, the late George Constable, Esq., of Wallace Craigie, near Dundee, whom I have already introduced to my reader as the original Antiquary of Monkbarns. He had been present, I think, at the trial at Carlisle, and

* See Keiths of Craig. Note 13.
† [See Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, vol. ix. pp. 173, 174.]

seldom mentioned the venerable judge's charge to the jury without shedding tears, which had peculiar pathos, as flowing down features carrying rather a sarcastic or almost a cynical expression.

This worthy gentleman's reputation for shrewd Scottish sense, knowledge of our national antiquities, and a racy humor peculiar to himself, must be still remembered. For myself, I have pride in recording that for many years we were, in Wordsworth's language,

> A pair of friends, though I was young,
> And "George" was seventy-two.

W. S.

ABBOTSFORD, *Aug.* 15, 1831.

CHRONICLES OF THE CANONGATE

CHAPTER I

MR. CHRYSTAL CROFTANGRY'S ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF

Sic itur ad astra.

"THIS is the path to heaven." Such is the ancient motto attached to the armorial bearings of the Canongate, and which is inscribed, with greater or less propriety, upon all the public buildings, from the church to the pillory, in the ancient quarter of Edinburgh which bears, or rather once bore, the same relation to the Good Town that Westminster does to London, being still possessed of the palace of the sovereign, as it formerly was dignified by the residence of the principal nobility and gentry. I may, therefore, with some propriety, put the same motto at the head of the literary undertaking by which I hope to illustrate the hitherto undistinguished name of Chrystal Croftangry.

The public may desire to know something of an author who pitches at such height his ambitious expectations. The gentle reader, therefore—for I am much of Captain Bobadil's humor, and could to no other extend myself so far—the *gentle* reader, then, will be pleased to understand, that I am a Scottish gentleman of the old school, with a fortune, temper, and person rather the worse for wear. I have known the world for these forty years, having written myself man nearly since that period, and I do not think it is much mended. But this is an opinion which I keep to myself when I am among younger folk, for I recollect, in my youth, quizzing the sexagenarians who carried back their ideas of a perfect state of society to the days of laced coats and triple ruffles, and some of them to the blood and blows of the Forty-five. Therefore I am cautious in exercising the right of censorship, which is supposed to be acquired by men arrived at, or approaching, the mysterious period of

life when the numbers of seven and nine multiplied into each other form what sages have termed the grand climacteric.

Of the earlier part of my life it is only necessary to say, that I swept the boards of the Parliament House with the skirts of my gown for the usual number of years during which young lairds were in my time expected to keep term, got no fees, laughed and made others laugh, drank claret at Bayle's, Fortune's, and Walker's, and eat oysters in the Covenant Close.

Becoming my own master, I flung my gown at the barkeeper, and commenced gay man on my own account. In Edinburgh, I ran into all the expensive society which the place then afforded. When I went to my house in the shire of Lanark, I emulated to the utmost the expenses of men of large fortune, and had my hunters, my first-rate pointers, my game-cocks, and feeders. I can more easily forgive myself for these follies than for others of a still more blamable kind, so indifferently cloaked over, that my poor mother thought herself obliged to leave my habitation, and betake herself to a small, inconvenient jointure-house, which she occupied till her death. I think, however, I was not exclusively to blame in this separation, and I believe my mother afterwards condemned herself for being too hasty. Thank God, the adversity which destroyed the means of continuing my dissipation restored me to the affections of my surviving parent!

My course of life could not last. I ran too fast to run long; and when I would have checked my career, I was perhaps too near the brink of the precipice. Some mishaps I prepared by my own folly, others came upon me unawares. I put my estate out to nurse to a fat man of business, who smothered the babe he should have brought back to me in health and strength, and, in dispute with this honest gentleman, I found, like a skilful general, that my position would be most judiciously assumed by taking it up near the Abbey of Holyrood.* It was then I first became acquainted with the quarter, which my little work will, I hope, render immortal, and grew familiar with those magnificent wilds, through which the kings of Scotland once chased the dark-brown deer, but which were chiefly recommended to me in those days by their being inaccessible to those metaphysical persons whom the law of the neighboring country terms

* See Sanctuary of Holyrood. Note 14.

John Doe and Richard Roe. In short, the precincts of the palace are now best known as being a place of refuge at any time from all pursuit for civil debt.

Dire was the strife betwixt my quondam doer and myself; during which my motions were circumscribed, like those of some conjured demon, within a circle, which, beginning "at the northern gate of the King's Park, thence running northward, is bounded on the left by the king's garden-wall, and the gutter, or kennel, in a line wherewith it crosses the High Street to the Water-gate, and passing through the same, is bounded by the walls of the tennis-court and physic-garden, etc. It then follows the wall of the churchyard, joins the northwest wall of St. Ann's yards, and going east to the clack mill-house, turns southward to the turnstile in the king's park-wall, and includes the whole King's Park within the sanctuary."

These limits, which I abridge from the accurate Maitland, once marked the girth, or asylum, belonging to the Abbey of Holyrood, and which, being still an appendage to the royal palace, has retained the privilege of an asylum for civil debt. One would think the space sufficiently extensive for a man to stretch his limbs in, as, besides a reasonable proportion of level ground, considering that the scene lies in Scotland, it includes within its precincts the mountain of Arthur's Seat, and the rocks and pasture land called Salisbury Crags. But yet it is inexpressible how, after a certain time had elapsed, I used to long for Sunday, which permitted me to extend my walk without limitation. During the other six days of the week I felt a sickness of heart which, but for the speedy approach of the hebdomadal day of liberty, I could hardly have endured. I experienced the impatience of a mastiff, who tugs in vain to extend the limits which his chain permits.

Day after day I walked by the side of the kennel which divides the sanctuary from the unprivileged part of the Canongate; and though the month was July, and the scene the old town of Edinburgh, I preferred it to the fresh air and verdant turf which I might have enjoyed in the King's Park, or to the cool and solemn gloom of the portico which surrounds the palace. To an indifferent person either side of the gutter would have seemed much the same—the houses equally mean, the children as ragged and dirty, the carmen as brutal, the whole forming the same picture of low life in a deserted and impoverished quarter of a large city. But to me the gutter, or kennel, was what the brook Kidron was

to Shimei: death was denounced against him should he cross it, doubtless because it was known to his wisdom who pronounced the doom, that, from the time the crossing the stream was debarred, the devoted man's desire to transgress the precept would become irresistible, and he would be sure to draw down on his head the penalty which he had already justly incurred by cursing the anointed of God. For my part, all Elysium seemed opening on the other side of the kennel, and I envied the little blackguards who, stopping the current with their little dam-dikes of mud, had a right to stand on either side of the nasty puddle which best pleased them. I was so childish as even to make an occasional excursion across, were it only for a few yards, and felt the triumph of a schoolboy, who, trespassing in an orchard, hurries back again with a fluttering sensation of joy and terror, betwixt the pleasure of having executed his purpose and the fear of being taken or discovered.

I have sometimes asked myself, what I should have done in case of actual imprisonment, since I could not bear without impatience a restriction which is comparatively a mere trifle; but I really could never answer the question to my own satisfaction. I have all my life hated those treacherous expedients called *mezzo termini*, and it is possible with this disposition I might have endured more patiently an absolute privation of liberty than the more modified restrictions to which my residence in the sanctuary at this period subjected me. If, however, the feelings I then experienced were to increase in intensity according to the difference between a jail and my actual condition. I must have hanged myself, or pined to death; there could have been no other alternative.

Amongst many companions who forgot and neglected me of course, when my difficulties seemed to be inextricable, I had one true friend; and that friend was a barrister, who knew the laws of his country well, and, tracing them up to the spirit of equity and justice in which they originate, had repeatedly prevented, by his benevolent and manly exertions, the triumphs of selfish cunning over simplicity and folly. He undertook my cause, with the assistance of a solicitor of a character similar to his own. My quondam doer had ensconced himself chin-deep among legal trenches, hornworks, and covered ways; but my two protectors shelled him out of his defenses, and I was at length a free man, at liberty to go or stay wheresoever my mind listed.

I left my lodgings as hastily as if it had been a pest-house;

I did not even stop to receive some change that was due to me on settling with my landlady, and I saw the poor woman stand at her door looking after my precipitate flight, and shaking her head as she wrapped the silver which she was counting for me in a separate piece of paper, apart from the store in her own moleskin purse. An honest Highlandwoman was Janet MacEvoy, and deserved a greater remuneration, had I possessed the power of bestowing it. But my eagerness of delight was too extreme to pause for explanation with Janet. On I pushed through the groups of children, of whose sports I had been so often a lazy lounging spectator. I sprung over the gutter as if it had been the fatal Styx, and I a ghost, which, eluding Pluto's authority, was making its escape from Limbo Lake. My friend had difficulty to restrain me from running like a madman up the street; and in spite of his kindness and hospitality, which soothed me for a day or two, I was not quite happy until I found myself aboard of a Leith smack, and, standing down the firth with a fair wind, might snap my fingers at the retreating outline of Arthur's Seat, to the vicinity of which I had been so long confined.

It is not my purpose to trace my future progress through life. I had extricated myself, or rather had been freed by my friends, from the brambles and thickets of the law, but, as befell the sheep in the fable, a great part of my fleece was left behind me. Something remained, however: I was in the season for exertion, and, as my good mother used to say, there was always life for living folk. Stern necessity gave my manhood that prudence which my youth was a stranger to. I faced danger, I endured fatigue, I sought foreign climates, and proved that I belonged to the nation which is proverbially patient of labor and prodigal of life. Independence, like liberty to Virgil's shepherd, came late, but came at last, with no great affluence in its train, but bringing enough to support a decent appearance for the rest of my life, and to induce cousins to be civil, and gossips to say, "I wonder who old Croft will make his heir? He must have picked up something, and I should not be surprised if it prove more than folk think of."

My first impulse when I returned home was to rush to the house of my benefactor, the only man who had in my distress interested himself in my behalf. He was a snuff-taker, and it had been the pride of my heart to save the *ipsa corpora* of the first score of guineas I could hoard, and to have them converted into as tasteful a snuff-box as Rundell and

Bridge could devise. This I had thrust for security into the breast of my waistcoat, while, impatient to transfer it to the person for whom it was destined, I hastened to his house in Brown's Square. When the front of the house became visible, a feeling of alarm checked me. I had been long absent from Scotland, my friend was some years older than I; he might have been called to the congregation of the just. I paused, and gazed on the house, as if I had hoped to form some conjecture from the outward appearance concerning the state of the family within. I know not how it was, but the lower windows being all closed and no one stirring, my sinister forebodings were rather strengthened. I regretted now that I had not made inquiry before I left the inn where I alighted from the mail-coach. But it was too late; so I hurried on, eager to know the best or the worst which I could learn.

The brass-plate bearing my friend's name and designation was still on the door, and, when it was opened, the old domestic appeared a good deal older, I thought, than he ought naturally to have looked, considering the period of my absence, "Is Mr. Sommerville at home?" said I pressing forward.

"Yes, sir," said John, placing himself in opposition to my entrance, "he is at home, but——"

"But he is not in," said I. "I remember your phrase of old, John. Come, I will step into his room, and leave a line for him."

John was obviously embarrassed by my familiarity. I was some one, he saw, whom he ought to recollect, at the same it was evident he remembered nothing about me.

"Ay, sir, my master is in, and in his own room, but——"

I would not hear him out, but passed before him towards the well-known apartment.

A young lady came out of the room a little disturbed, as it seemed, and said, "John, what is the matter?"

"A gentleman, Miss Nelly, that insists on seeing my master."

"A very old and deeply indebted friend," said I, "that ventures to press myself on my much-respected benefactor on my return from abroad."

"Alas, sir," replied she, "my uncle would be happy to see you, but——"

At this moment, something was heard within the apartment like the falling of a plate, or glass, and immediately after my friend's voice called angrily and eagerly for his

niece. She entered the room hastily, and so did I. But it was to see a spectacle compared with which that of my benefactor stretched on his bier would have been a happy one.

The easy-chair filled with cushions, the extended limbs swathed in flannel, the wide wrapping-gown and nightcap, showed illness; but the dimmed eye, once so replete with living fire; the blabber lip, whose dilation and compression used to give such character to his animated countenance; the stammering tongue, that once poured forth such floods of masculine eloquence, and had often swayed the opinion of the sages whom he addressed—all these sad symptoms evinced that my friend was in the melancholy condition of those in whom the principle of animal life has unfortunately survived that of mental intelligence. He gazed a moment at me, but then seemed insensible of my presence, and went on—he, once the most courteous and well bred—to babble unintelligible but violent reproaches against his niece and servant, because he himself had dropped a tea-cup in attempting to place it on a table at his elbow. His eyes caught a momentary fire from his irritation; but he struggled in vain for words to express himself adequately, as, looking from his servant to his niece, and then to the table, he labored to explain that they had placed it, though it touched his chair, at too great a distance from him.

The young person, who had naturally a resigned, Madonna-like expression of countenance, listened to his impatient chiding with the most humble submission, checked the servant, whose less delicate feelings would have entered on his justification, and gradually, by the sweet and soft tone of her voice, soothed to rest the spirit of causeless irritation.

She then cast a look towards me, which expressed, "You see all that remains of him whom you call friend." It seemed also to say, "Your longer presence here can only be distressing to us all."

"Forgive me, young lady," I said, as well as tears would permit; "I am a person deeply obliged to your uncle. My name is Croftangry."

"Lord! and that I should not hae minded ye, Maister Croftangry," said the servant. "Ay, I mind my master had muckle fash about your job. I hae heard him order in fresh candles as midnight chappit, and till't again. Indeed, ye had aye his gude word, Mr. Croftangry, for a' that folks said about you."

"Hold your tongue, John," said the lady, somewhat

angrily; and then continued, addressing herself to me, "I am sure, sir, you must be sorry to see my uncle in this state. I know you are his friend. I have heard him mention your name, and wonder he never heard from you." A new cut this, and it went to my heart. But she continued, "I really do not know if it is right that any should—— If my uncle should know you, which I scarce think possible, he would be much affected, and the doctor says that any agitation—— But here comes Dr. —— to give his own opinion."

Dr. —— entered. I had left him a middle-aged man; he was now an elderly one, but still the same benevolent Samaritan, who went about doing good, and thought the blessings of the poor as good a recompense of his professional skill as the gold of the rich.

He looked at me with surprise, but the young lady said a word of introduction, and I, who was known to the doctor formerly, hastened to complete it. He recollected me perfectly, and intimated that he was well acquainted with the reasons I had for being deeply interested in the fate of his patient. He gave me a very melancholy account of my poor friend, drawing me for that purpose a little apart from the lady. "The light of life," he said, "was trembling in the socket; he scarcely expected it would ever leap up even into a momentary flash, but more was impossible." He then stepped towards his patient, and put some questions, to which the poor invalid, though he seemed to recognize the friendly and familiar voice, answered only in a faltering and uncertain manner.

The young lady, in her turn, had drawn back when the doctor approached his patient. "You see how it is with him," said the doctor, addressing me; "I have heard our poor friend, in one of the most eloquent of his pleadings, give a description of this very disease, which he compared to the tortures inflicted by Mezentius, when he chained the dead to the living. 'The soul,' he said, 'is imprisoned in its dungeon of flesh, and, though retaining its natural and unalienable properties, can no more exert them than the captive inclosed within a prison-house can act as a free agent.' Alas! to see *him*, who could so well describe what this malady was in others, a prey himself to its infirmities! I shall never forget the solemn tone of expression with which he summed up the incapacities of the paralytic—the deafened ear, the dimmed eye, the crippled limbs—in the noble words of Juvenal:

Omni
Membrorum damno, major dementia, quæ nec
Nomina servorum nec vultum agnoscit amici."

As the physician repeated these lines, a flash of intelligence seemed to revive in the invalid's eye—sunk again—again struggled, and he spoke more intelligibly than before, and in the tone of one eager to say something which he felt would escape him unless said instantly. "A question of death-bed—a question of death-bed, doctor—a reduction *ex capite lecti*— Withering against Wilibus—about the *morbus sonticus*. I pleaded the cause for the pursuer—I, and —and—why, I shall forget my own name—I, and—he that was the wittiest and the best-humored man living——"

The description enabled the doctor to fill up the blank, and the patient joyfully repeated the name suggested. "Ay —ay," he said, "just he—Harry—poor Harry——" The light in his eye died away, and he sunk back in his easy-chair.

"You have now seen more of our poor friend, Mr. Croftangry," said the physician, "than I dared venture to promise you; and now I must take my professional authority on me, and ask you to retire. Miss Sommerville will, I am sure, let you know if a moment should by any chance occur when her uncle can see you."

What could I do? I gave my card to the young lady, and, taking my offering from my bosom—"If my poor friend," I said, with accents as broken almost as his own, "should ask where this came from, name me; and say from the most obliged and most grateful man alive. Say, the gold of which it is composed was saved by grains at a time, and was hoarded with as much avarice as ever was a miser's. To bring it here I have come a thousand miles, and now, alas, I find him thus!"

I laid the box on the table, and was retiring with a lingering step. The eye of the invalid was caught by it, as that of a child by a glittering toy, and with infantine impatience he faltered out inquiries of his niece. With gentle mildness she repeated again and again who I was, and why I came, etc. I was about to turn and hasten from a scene so painful, when the physician laid his hand on my sleeve. "Stop," he said, "there is a change."

There was, indeed, and a marked one. A faint glow spread over his pallid features—they seemed to gain the look of intelligence which belongs to vitality—his eye once more kindled, his lip colored, and, drawing himself up out of the

listless posture he had hitherto maintained, he rose without assistance. The doctor and the servant ran to give him their support. He waved them aside, and they were contented to place themselves in such a position behind as might ensure against accident, should his newly-acquired strength decay as suddenly as it had revived.

"My dear Croftangry," he said, in the tone of kindness of other days, "I am glad to see you returned. You find me but poorly; but my little niece here and Dr. —— are very kind. God bless you, my dear friend! we shall not meet again till we meet in a better world."

I pressed his extended hand to my lips, I pressed it to my bosom, I would fain have flung myself on my knees; but the doctor, leaving the patient to the young lady and the servant, who wheeled forward his chair, and were replacing him in it, hurried me out of the room. "My dear sir," he said, "you ought to be satisfied; you have seen our poor invalid more like his former self than he has been for months, or than he may be perhaps again until all is over. The whole faculty could not have assured such an interval; I must see whether anything can be derived from it to improve the general health. Pray, begone." The last argument hurried me from the spot, agitated by a crowd of feelings, all of them painful.

When I had overcome the shock of this great disappointment, I renewed gradually my acquaintance with one or two old companions, who, though of infinitely less interest to my feelings than my unfortunate friend, served to relieve the pressure of actual solitude, and who were not perhaps the less open to my advances, that I was a bachelor somewhat stricken in years, newly arrived from foreign parts, and certainly independent, if not wealthy.

I was considered as a tolerable subject of speculation by some, and I could not be burdensome to any; I was, therefore, according to the ordinary rule of Edinburgh hospitality, a welcome guest in several respectable families; but I found no one who could replace the loss I had sustained in my best friend and benefactor. I wanted something more than mere companionship could give me, and where was I to look for it? Among the scattered remnants of those that had been my gay friends of yore? Alas,

> Many a lad I loved was dead,
> And many a lass grown old.

Besides, all community of ties between us had ceased to exist,

and such of former friends as were still in the world held their life in a different tenor from what I did.

Some had become misers, and were as eager in saving sixpence as ever they had been in spending a guinea. Some had turned agriculturists: their talk was of oxen, and they were only fit companions for graziers. Some stuck to cards, and though no longer deep gamblers, rather played small game than sat out. This I particularly despised. The strong impulse of gaming, alas! I had felt in my time; it is as intense as it is criminal, but it produces excitation and interest, and I can conceive how it should become a passion with strong and powerful minds. But to dribble away life in exchanging bits of painted pasteboard round a green table, for the piddling concern of a few shillings, can only be excused in folly or superannuation. It is like riding on a rocking-horse, where your utmost exertion never carries you a foot forward; it is a kind of mental treadmill, where you are perpetually climbing, but can never rise an inch. From these hints, my readers will perceive I am incapacitated for one of the pleasures of old age, which, though not mentioned by Cicero, is not the least frequent resource in the present day—the club-room and the snug hand at whist.

To return to my old companions. Some frequented public assemblies, like the ghost of Beau Nash, or any other beau of half a century back, thrust aside by tittering youth, and pitied by those of their own age. In fine, some went into devotion, as the French term it, and others, I fear, went to the devil; a few found resources in science and letters; one or two turned philosophers in a small way, peeped into miscroscopes, and became familiar with the fashionable experiments of the day. Some took to reading, and I was one of them.

Some grains of repulsion towards the society around me, some painful recollections of early faults and follies, some touch of displeasure with living mankind, inclined me rather to a study of antiquities, and particularly those of my own country. The reader, if I can prevail on myself to continue the present work, will probably be able to judge, in the course of it, whether I have made any useful progress in the study of the olden times.

I owed this turn of study, in part, to the conversation of my kind man of business, Mr. Fairscribe, whom I mentioned as having seconded the efforts of my invaluable friend, in bringing the cause on which my liberty and the remnant of my property depended to a favorable decision. He had

given me a most kind reception on my return. He was too much engaged in his profession for me to intrude on him often, and perhaps his mind was too much trammeled with its details to permit his being willingly withdrawn from them. In short, he was not a person of my poor friend Sommerville's expanded spirit, and rather a lawyer of the ordinary class of formalists, but a most able and excellent man. When my estate was sold, he retained some of the older title-deeds, arguing, from his own feelings, that they would be of more consequence to the heir of the old family than to the new purchaser. And when I returned to Edinburgh, and found him still in the exercise of the profession to which he was an honor, he sent to my lodgings the old family Bible, which lay always on my father's table, two or three other moldy volumes, and a couple of sheepskin bags, full of parchments and papers, whose appearance was by no means inviting,

The next time I shared Mr. Fairscribe's hospitable dinner, I failed not to return him due thanks for his kindness, which acknowledgment, indeed, I proportioned rather to the idea which I knew he entertained of the value of such things than to the interest with which I myself regarded them. But the conversation turning on my family who were old proprietors in the Upper Ward of Clydesdale, gradually excited some interest in my mind ; and when I retired to my solitary parlor, the first thing I did was to look for a pedigree, or sort of history of the family, or house of Croftangry, once of that Ilk, latterly of Glentanner. The discoveries which I made shall enrich the next chapter.

CHAPTER II

IN WHICH MR. CROFTANGRY CONTINUES HIS STORY

> What's property, dear Swift? I see it alter
> From you to me, from me to Peter Walter.
>
> POPE.

"CROFTANGRY—Croftandrew—Croftanridge—Croftangrey—for sa mony wise hath the name been spellit—is weel known to be ane house of grit antiquity; and it is said that King Milcolumb, or Malcolm, being the first of our Scottish princes quha removit across the Firth of Forth, did reside and occupy ane palace at Edinburgh, and had there ane valziant man, who did him man-service, by keeping the croft, or corn-land, which was tilled for the convenience of the King's household, and was thence callit Croft-an-ri, that is to say, the King his croft; quhilk place, though now coverit with biggings, is to this day called Croftangry, and lyeth near to the royal palace. And whereas that some of those who bear this auld and honorable name may take scorn that it ariseth from the tilling of the ground, quhilk men account a slavish occupation, yet we ought to honor the pleugh and spade, seeing we all derive our being from our father Adam, whose lot it became to cultivate the earth, in respect of his fall and transgression.

"Also we have witness, as weel in holy writt as in profane history, of the honor in quhilk husbandrie was held of old, and how prophets have been taken from the pleugh, and great captains raised up to defend their ain countries, sic as Cincinnatus, and the like, who fought not the common enemy with the less valiancy that their arms had been exercised in halding the stilts of the pleugh, and their bellicose skill in driving of yauds and owsen.

"Likewise there are sindry honorable families, quhilk are now of our native Scottish nobility, and have clombe higher up the brae of preferment than what this house of Croftangry hath done, quhilk shame not to carry in their warlike shield and insignia of dignity the tools and implements the quhilk their first forefathers exercised in laboring the croft-rig, or, as the poet Virgilius calleth it eloquently, in subdu-

ing the soil. And no doubt this ancient house of Croftangry, while it continued to be called of that Ilk, produced many worshipful and famous patriots, of quhom I now prætermit the names; it being my purpose, if God shall spare me life for sic ane pious *officium*, or duty, to resume the first part of my narrative touching the house of Croftangry, when I can set down at length the evidents and historical witness anent the facts which I shall allege, seeing that words, when they are unsupported by proofs, are like seed sown on the naked rocks, or like an house biggit on the flitting and faithless sands."

Here I stopped to draw breath; for the style of my grandsire, the inditer of this goodly matter, was rather lengthy, as our American friends say. Indeed, I reserve the rest of the piece until I can obtain admission to the Bannatyne Club,* when I propose to throw off an edition, limited according to the rules of that erudite society, with a facsimile of the manuscript, emblazonry of the family arms, surrounded by their quartering, and a handsome disclamation of family pride, with *Hæc nos novimus esse nihil*, or *Vixeo nostra voco.*

In the meantime, to speak truth, I cannot but suspect that, though my worthy ancestor puffed vigorously to swell up the dignity of his family, we had never, in fact, risen above the rank of middling proprietors. The estate of Glentanner came to us by the intermarriage of my ancestor with Tib Sommeril, termed by the southrons Sommerville, † a daughter of that noble house, but I fear on what my great-grandsire calls "the wrong side of the blanket." Her husband, Gilbert, was killed fighting, as the *inquisitio post mortem* has it, "*sub vexillo regis, apud prælium juxta Branxton* LIE *Flodden-field.*"

We had our share in other national misfortunes; were forfeited, like Sir John Colville of the Dale, for following our betters to the field of Langside; and, in the contentious times of the last Stuarts, we were severely fined for harboring and resetting intercommuned ministers; and narrowly escaped giving a martyr to the calendar of the Covenant, in the person of the father of our family historian. He "took the sheaf from the mare," however, as the MS. expresses it, and agreed to accept of the terms of pardon offered by government, and sign the bond, in evidence he would give no farther ground of offense. My grandsire glosses over his father's backsliding as smoothly as he can, and comforts

* See Note 15. † See Sommerville Family. Note 16.

himself with ascribing his want of resolution to his unwillingness to wreck the ancient name and family, and to permit his lands and lineage to fall under a doom of forfeiture.

"And indeed," said the venerable compiler, "as, praised be God, we seldom meet in Scotland with these belly-gods and voluptuaries, whilk are unnatural enough to devour their patrimony bequeathed to them by their forbears in chambering and wantonness, so that they come, with the prodigal son, to the husks and the swine-trough; and as I have the less to dreid the existence of such unnatural Neroes in mine own family to devour the substance of their own house like brute beasts out of mere gluttonie and epicurishnesse, so I need only warn mine descendants against over-hastily meddling with the mutations in state and in religion, which have been near-hand to the bringing this poor house of Croftangry to perdition, as we have shown more than once. And albeit I would not that my successors sat still altogether when called on by their duty to kirk and king; yet I would have them wait till stronger and walthier men than themselves were up, so that either they may have the better chance of getting through the day; or, failing of that, the conquering party having some fatter quarry to live upon, may, like gorged hawks, spare the smaller game."

There was something in this conclusion which at first reading piqued me extremely, and I was so unnatural as to curse the whole concern, as poor, bald, pitiful trash, in which a silly old man was saying a great deal about nothing at all. Nay, my first impression was to thrust it into the fire, the rather that it reminded me, in no very flattering manner, of the loss of the family property, to which the compiler of the history was so much attached, in the very manner which he most severely reprobated. It even seemed to my aggrieved feelings that his unprescient gaze on futurity, in which he could not anticipate the folly of one of his descendants, who should throw away the whole inheritance in a few years of idle expense and folly, was meant as a personal incivility to myself, though written fifty or sixty years before I was born.

A little reflection made me ashamed of this feeling of impatience, and as I looked at the even, concise, yet tremulous, hand in which the manuscript was written, I could not help thinking, according to an opinion I have heard seriously maintained, that something of a man's character may be conjectured from his handwriting. That neat, but crowded

and constrained, small hand argued a man of a good conscience, well regulated passions, and, to use his own phrase, an upright walk in life; but it also indicated narrowness of spirit, inveterate prejudice, and hinted at some degree of intolerance, which, though not natural to the disposition, had arisen out of a limited education. The passages from Scripture and the classics, rather profusely than happily introduced, and written in a half-text character to mark their importance, illustrated that peculiar sort of pedantry which always considers the argument as gained if secured by a quotation. Then the flourished capital letters, which ornamented the commencement of each paragraph, and the name of his family and of his ancestors, whenever these occurred in the page, do they not express forcibly the pride and sense of importance with which the author undertook and accomplished his task? I persuaded myself, the whole was so complete a portrait of the man, that it would not have been a more undutiful act to have defaced his picture, or even to have disturbed his bones in his coffin, than to destroy his manuscript. I thought, for a moment, of presenting it to Mr. Fairscribe; but that confounded passage about the prodigal and swine-trough—— I settled at last it was as well to lock it up in my own bureau, with the intention to look at it no more.

But I do not know how it was that the subject began to sit nearer my heart than I was aware of, and I found myself repeatedly engaged in reading descriptions of farms which were no longer mine, and boundaries which marked the property of others. A love of the *natal solum*, if Swift be right in translating these words "family estate," began to awaken in my bosom; the recollections of my own youth adding little to it, save what was connected with field sports. A career of pleasure is unfavorable for acquiring a taste for natural beauty, and still more so for forming associations of a sentimental kind, connecting us with the inanimate objects around us.

I had thought little about my estate while I possessed and was wasting it, unless as affording the rude materials out of which a certain inferior race of creatures, called tenants, were bound to produce, in a greater quantity than they actually did, a certain return called rent, which was destined to supply my expenses. This was my general view of the matter. Of particular places, I recollected that Garval Hill was a famous piece of rough upland pasture for rearing young colts and teaching them to throw their feet; that

Minion Burn had the finest yellow trout in the country; that Seggy Cleugh was unequaled for woodcocks; that Bengibert Moors afforded excellent moorfowl-shooting; and that the clear bubbling fountain called the Harper's Well was the best recipe in the world on the morning after a 'hard-go' with my neighbor fox-hunters. Still these ideas recalled, by degrees, pictures of which I had since learned to appreciate the merit—scenes of silent loneliness, where extensive moors, undulating into wild hills, were only disturbed by the whistle of the plover or the crow of the heath-cock; wild ravines creeping up into mountains, filled with natural wood, and which, when traced downwards along the path formed by shepherds and nutters, were found gradually to enlarge and deepen, as each formed a channel to its own brook, sometimes bordered by steep banks of earth, often with the more romantic boundary of naked rocks or cliffs, crested with oak, mountain-ash, and hazel—all gratifying the eye the more that the scenery was, from the bare nature of the country around, totally unexpected.

I had recollections, too, of fair and fertile holms, or level plains, extending between the wooded banks and the bold stream of the Clyde, which, colored like pure amber, or rather having the hue of the pebbles called cairngorm, rushes over sheets of rock and beds of gravel, inspiring a species of awe from the few and faithless fords which it presents, and the frequency of fatal accidents, now diminished by the number of bridges. These alluvial holms were frequently bordered by triple and quadruple rows of large trees, which gracefully marked their boundary, and dipped their long arms into the foaming stream of the river. Other places I remembered, which had been described by the old huntsman as the lodge of tremendous wildcats, or the spot where tradition stated the mighty stag to have been brought to bay, or where heroes, whose might was now as much forgotten, were said to have been slain by surprise, or in battle.

It is not to be supposed that these finished landscapes became visible before the eyes of my imagination, as the scenery of the stage is disclosed by the rising of the curtain. I have said, that I had looked upon the country around me, during the hurried and dissipated period of my life, with the eyes indeed of my body, but without those of my understanding. It was piece by piece, as a child picks out its lesson, that I began to recollect the beauties of nature which had once surrounded me in the home of my fore-

fathers. A natural taste for them must have lurked at the bottom of my heart, which awakened when I was in foreign countries, and becoming by degrees a favorite passion, gradually turned its eyes inwards, and ransacked the neglected stores which my memory had involuntarily recorded, and, when excited, exerted herself to collect and to complete.

I began now to regret more bitterly than ever the having fooled away my family property, the care and improvement of which I saw might have afforded an agreeable employment for my leisure, which only went to brood on past misfortunes, and increase useless repining. "Had but a single farm been reserved, however small," said I one day to Mr. Fairscribe, "I should have had a place I could call my home, and something that I could call business."

"It might have been managed," answered Fairscribe; "and for my part, I inclined to keep the mansion-house, mains, and some of the old family acres together; but both Mr. —— and you were of opinion that the money would be more useful."

"True—true, my good friend," said I; "I was a fool then, and did not think I could incline to be Glentanner with £200 or £300 a-year, instead of Glentanner with as many thousands. I was then a haughty, pettish, ignorant, dissipated, broken-down Scottish laird; and thinking my imaginary consequence altogether ruined, I cared not how soon, or how absolutely, I was rid of everything that recalled it to my own memory or that of others."

"And now it is like you have changed your mind?" said Fairscribe. "Well, fortune is apt to circumduce the term upon us; but I think she may allow you to revise your condescendence."

"How do you mean, my good friend?"

"Nay," said Fairscribe, "there is ill luck in averring till one is sure of his facts. I will look back on a file of newspapers, and to-morrow you shall hear from me; come, help yourself—I have seen you fill your glass higher."

"And shall see it again," said I, pouring out what remained of our bottle of claret; "the wine is capital, and so shall our toast be. To your fireside, my good friend. And now we shall go beg a Scots song without foreign graces from my little siren Miss Katie."

The next day accordingly I received a parcel from Mr. Fairscribe with a newspaper inclosed, among the advertisements of which one was marked with a cross as requiring my attention. I read to my surprise—

"DESIRABLE ESTATE FOR SALE

"By order of the Lords of Council and Session, will be exposed to sale in the New Sessions House of Edinburgh, on Wednesday the 25th November 18—, all and whole the lands and barony of Glentanner, now called Castle Treddles, lying in the middle Ward of Clydesdale and shire of Lanark, with the teinds, parsonage and vicarage, fishings in the Clyde, woods, mosses, moors, and pasturages," etc., etc.

The advertisement went on to set forth the advantages of the soil, situation, natural beauties, and capabilities of improvement, not forgetting its being a freehold estate, with the particular polypus capacity of being sliced up into two, three, or, with a little assistance, four freehold qualifications, and a hint that the county was likely to be eagerly contested between two great families. The upset price at which "the said lands and barony and others" were to be exposed was thirty years' purchase of the proven rental, which was about a fourth more than the property had fetched at the last sale. This, which was mentioned, I suppose, to show the improvable character of the land, would have given another some pain; but let me speak truth of myself in good as in evil—it pained not me. I was only angry that Fairscribe, who knew something generally of the extent of my funds, should have tantalized me by sending me information that my family property was in the market, since he must have known that the price was far out of my reach.

But a letter dropped from the parcel on the floor, which attracted my eye, and explained the riddle. A client of Mr. Fairscribe's, a moneyed man, thought of buying Glentanner, merely as an investment of money—it was even unlikely he would ever see it; and so the price of the whole being some thousand pounds beyond what cash he had on hand, this accommodating Dives would gladly take a partner in the sale for any detached farm, and would make no objection to its including the most desirable part of the estate in point of beauty, provided the price was made adequate. Mr. Fairscribe would take care I was not imposed on in the matter, and said in his card, he believed, if I really wished to make such a purchase, I had better go out and look at the premises, advising me, at the same time, to keep a strict incognito—an advice somewhat superfluous, since I am naturally of a retired and reserved disposition.

CHAPTER III

MR. CROFTANGRY, *INTER ALIA*, REVISITS GLENTANNER

Then sing of stage-coaches,
And fear no reproaches
For riding in one;
But daily be jogging,
Whilst, whistling and flogging,
Whilst, whistling and flogging,
The coachman drives on.

FARQUHAR.

DISGUISED in a gray surtout which had seen service, a white castor on my head, and a stout Indian cane in my hand, the next week saw me on the top of a mail-coach driving to the westward.

I like mail-coaches, and I hate them. I like them for my convenience, but I detest them for setting the whole world a-gadding, instead of sitting quietly still minding their own business, and preserving the stamp of originality of character which nature or education may have impressed on them. Off they go, jingling against each other in the rattling vehicle till they have no more variety of stamp in them than so many smooth shillings—the same even in their Welsh wigs and greatcoats, each without more individuality than belongs to a partner of the company, as the waiter calls them, of the North coach.

Worthy Mr. Piper, best of contractors who ever furnished four frampal jades for public use, I bless you when I set out on a journey myself; the neat coaches under your contract render the intercourse, from Johnnie Groat's House to Ladykirk and Cornhill bridge, safe, pleasant, and cheap. But, Mr. Piper, you, who are a shrewd arithmetician, did it never occur to you to calculate how many fools' heads, which might have produced an idea or two in the year, if suffered to remain in quiet, get effectually addled by jolting to and fro in these flying chariots of yours; how many decent countrymen become conceited bumpkins after a cattle-show dinner in the capital, which they could not have attended save for your means; how many decent country parsons return critics and spouters, by way of importing the

newest taste from Edinburgh? And how will your conscience answer one day for carrying so many bonny lasses to barter modesty for conceit and levity at the metropolitan Vanity Fair?

Consider, too, the low rate to which you reduce human intellect. I do not believe your habitual customers have their ideas more enlarged than one of your coach-horses. They *knows* the road, like the English postilion, and they know nothing beside. They date, like the carriers at Gadshill, from the death of John Ostler;* the succession of guards forms a dynasty in their eyes; coachmen are their ministers of state, and an upset is to them a greater incident than a change of administration. Their only point of interest on the road is to save the time, and see whether the coach keeps the hour. This is surely a miserable degradation of human intellect. Take my advice, my good sir, and disinterestedly contrive that once or twice a quarter your most dexterous whip shall overturn a coachful of these superfluous travelers, *in terrorem* to those who, as Horace says, "delight in the dust raised by your chariots."

Your current and customury mail-coach passenger, too, gets abominably selfish, schemes successfully for the best seat, the freshest egg, the right cut of the sirloin. The mode of traveling is death to all the courtesies and kindnesses of life, and goes a great way to demoralize the character, and cause it to retrograde to barbarism. You allow us excellent dinners, but only twenty minutes to eat them; and what is the consequence? Bashful beauty sits on the one side of us, timid childhood on the other; respectable, yet somewhat feeble, old age is placed on our front; and all require those acts of politeness which ought to put every degree upon a level at the convivial board. But have we time—we the strong and active of the party—to perform the duties of the table to the more retired and bashful, to whom these little attentions are due? The lady should be pressed to her chicken, the old man helped to his favorite and tender slice, the child to his tart. But not a fraction of a minute have we to bestow on any other person than ourselves; and the prut-prut—tut-tut of the guard's discordant note summons us to the coach, the weaker party having gone without their dinner, and the able-bodied and active threatened with indigestion, from having swallowed victuals like a Lei'stershire clown bolting bacon.

On the memorable occasion I am speaking of, I lost my

* See the opening scene [of Act ii.] of the First Part of Shakspeare's *Henry IV.*

breakfast, sheerly from obeying the commands of a respectable-looking old lady, who once required me to ring the bell, and another time to help the tea-kettle. I have some reason to think she was literally an "old stager," who laughed in her sleeve at my complaisance, so that I have sworn in my secret soul revenge upon her sex, and all such errant damsels, of whatever age and degree, whom I may encounter in my travels. I mean all this without the least ill-will to my friend the coutractor, who I think, has approached as near as any one is like to do towards accomplishing the modest wish of the *amatus* and *amata* of the *Peri Bathous*,

> Ye gods, annihilate but time and space,
> And make two lovers happy.

I intend to give Mr. P. his full revenge when I come to discuss the more recent enormity of steamboats; meanwhile, I shall only say of both these modes of conveyance, that

> There is no living with them or without them.

I am perhaps more critical on the —— mail-coach on this particular occasion, that I did not meet all the respect from the worshipful company in his Majesty's carriage that I think I was entitled to. I must say it for myself, that I bear, in my own opinion at least, not a vulgar point about me. My face has seen service, but there is still a good set of teeth, an acquiline nose, and a quick gray eye, set a little too deep under the eyebrow; and a cue of the kind once called military may serve to show that my civil occupations have been sometimes mixed with those of war. Nevertheless, two idle young fellows in the vehicle, or rather on the top of it, were so much amused with the deliberation which I used in ascending to the same place of eminence, that I thought I should have been obliged to pull them up a little. And I was in no good-humor, at an unsuppressed laugh following my descent, when set down at the angle where a cross-road, striking off from the main one, led me towards Glentanner, from which I was still nearly five miles distant.

It was an old-fashioned road, which, preferring ascents to sloughs, was led in a straight line over height and hollow, through moor and dale. Every object around me, as I passed them in succession, reminded me of old days, and at the same time formed the strongest contrast with them possible. Unattended, on foot, with a small bundle in my hand, deemed scarce sufficient good company for the two shabby

genteels with whom I had been lately perched on the top of a mail-coach, I did not seem to be the same person with the young prodigal who lived with the noblest and gayest in the land, and who, thirty years before, would, in the same country, have been on the back of a horse that had been victor for a plate, or smoking along in his traveling chaise-and-four. My sentiments were not less changed than my condition. I could quite well remember that my ruling sensation in the days of heady youth was a mere schoolboy's eagerness to get farthest forward in the race in which I had engaged, to drink as many bottles as ——, to be thought as good a judge of a horse as ——, to have the knowing cut of ——'s jacket. These were thy gods, O Israel!

Now I was a mere looker-on, seldom an unmoved, and sometimes an angry, spectator, but still a spectator only, of the pursuits of mankind. I felt how little my opinion was valued by those engaged in the busy turmoil, yet I exercised it with the profusion of an old lawyer retired from his profession, who thrusts himself into his neighbor's affairs, and gives advice where it is not wanted, merely under the pretense of loving the crack of the whip.

I came amid these reflections to the brow of a hill, from which I expected to see Glentanner—a modest looking, yet comfortable, house, its walls covered with the most productive fruit-trees in that part of the country, and screened from the most stormy quarters of the horizon by a deep and ancient wood: which overhung the neighboring hill. The house was gone; a great part of the wood was felled; and instead of the gentlemanlike mansion, shrouded and embosomed among its old hereditary trees, stood Castle Treddles, ahuge lumping four-square pile of freestone, as bare as my nail, except for a paltry edging of decayed and lingering exotics, with an impoverished lawn stretched before it, which, instead of boasting deep green tapestry, enameled with daisies and with crowsfoot and cowslips, showed an extent of nakedness, raked, indeed, and leveled, but, where the sown grasses had failed with drought, and the earth retained its natural complexion, seemed nearly as brown and bare as when it was newly dug up.

The house was a large fabric, which pretended to its name of castle only from the front windows being finished in acute Gothic arches (being, by the way, the very reverse of the castellated style), and each angle graced with a turret about the size of a pepper-box. In every other respect it resembled a large town house, which like a fat burgess, had

taken a walk to the country on a holiday, and climbed to the top of an eminence to look around it. The bright red color of the freestone, the size of the building, the formality of its shape, and awkwardness of its position, harmonized as ill with the sweeping Clyde in front, and the bubbling brook which danced down on the right, as the fat civic form, with bushy wig, gold-headed cane, maroon-colored coat, and mottled silk stockings, would have accorded with the wild and magnificent scenery of Corehouse Linn.

I went up to the house. It was in that state of desertion which is perhaps the most unpleasant to look on, for the place was going to decay, without having been inhabitated. There were about the mansion, though deserted, none of the slow moldering touches of time, which communicate to buildings, as to the human frame, a sort of reverence, while depriving them of beauty and of strength. The disconcerted schemes of the laird of Castle Treddles had resembled fruit that becomes decayed without ever having ripened. Some windows broken, others patched, others blocked up with deals, gave a disconsolate air to all around, and seemed to say, "There, vanity had purposed to fix her seat, but was anticipated by poverty."

To the inside, after many a vain summons, I was at length admitted by an old laborer. The house contained every contrivance for luxury and accommodation: the kitchens were a model, and there were hot closets on the office staircase, that the dishes might not cool, as our Scottish phrase goes, between the kitchen and the hall. But instead of the genial smell of good cheer, these temples of Comus emitted the damp odor of sepulchral vaults, and the large cabinets of cast-iron looked like the cages of some feudal bastille. The eating-room and drawing-room, with an interior boudoir, were magnificent apartments, the ceilings fretted and adorned with stucco-work, which already was broken in many places, and looked in others damp and moldering; the wood paneling was shrunk, and warped, and cracked; the doors, which had not been hung for more than two years, were, nevertheless, already swinging loose from their hinges. Desolation, in short, was where enjoyment had never been; and the want of all the usual means to preserve was fast performing the work of decay.

The story was a common one, and told in a few words. Mr. Treddles, senior, who bought the estate, was a cautious, money-making person; his son, still embarked in commercial speculations, desired at the same time to enjoy his

opulence and to increase it. He incurred great expenses, amongst which this edifice was to be numbered. To support these he speculated boldly and unfortunately ; and thus the whole history is told, which may serve for more places than Glentanner.

Strange and various feelings ran through my bosom as I loitered in these deserted apartments, scarce hearing what my guide said to me about the size and destination of each room. The first sentiment, I am ashamed to say, was one of gratified spite. My patrician pride was pleased that the mechanic, who had not thought the house of the Croftangrys sufficiently good for him, had now experienced a fall in his turn. My next thought was as mean, though not so malicious. "I have had the better of this fellow," thought I: "if I lost the estate, I at least spent the price ; and Mr. Treddles has lost his among paltry commercial engagements."

"Wretch !" said the secret voice within, "darest thou exult in thy shame ? Recollect how thy youth and fortune were wasted in those years, and triumph not in the enjoyment of an existence which leveled thee with the beasts that perish. Bethink thee, how this poor man's vanity gave at least bread to the laborer, peasant, and citizen ; and his profuse expenditure, like water spilt on the ground, refreshed the lowly herbs and plants where it fell. But thou—whom hast thou enriched, during thy career of extravagance, save those brokers of the devil—vintners, panders, gamblers, and horse-jockeys ?" The anguish produced by this self-reproof was so strong, that I put my hand suddenly to my forehead, and was obliged to allege a sudden megrim to my attendant, in apology for the action, and a slight groan with which it was accompanied.

I then made an effort to turn my thoughts into a more philosophical current, and muttered half aloud, as a charm to lull any more painful thoughts to rest—

> Nunc ager Umbreni sub nomine, nuper Ofelli
> Dictus erat, nulli proprius ; sed cedit in usum
> Nunc mihi, nunc alii. Quocirca vivite fortes,
> Fortiaque adversis opponite pectora rebus.*

In my anxiety to fix the philosophical precept in my mind, I recited the last line aloud, which joined to my previous agitation, I afterwards found became the cause of a report that a mad schoolmaster had come from Edinburgh with the idea in his head of buying Castle Treddles.

* See Lines from Horace. Note 17.

As I saw my companion was desirous of getting rid of me, I asked where I was to find the person in whose hands were left the map of the estate and other particulars connected with the sale. The agent who had this in possession, I was told, lived at the town of ——; which, I was informed, and indeed knew well, was distant five miles and a bittock, which may pass in a country where they are less lavish of their land for two or three more. Being somewhat afraid of the fatigue of walking so far, I inquired if a horse or any sort of carriage was to be had, and was answered in the negative.

"But," said my cicerone, "you may halt a blink till next morning at the Treddles Arms, a very decent house, scarce a mile off."

"A new house, I suppose?" replied I.

"Na, it's a new public, but it's an auld house: it was aye the leddy's jointure-house in the Croftangry folks' time; but Mr. Treddles has fitted it up for the convenience of the country. Poor man, he was a public-spirited man, when he had the means."

"Duntarkin a public-house!" I exclaimed.

"Ay," said the fellow, surprised at my naming the place by its former title; "ye'll hae been in this country before, I'm thinking?"

"Long since," I replied. "And there is good accommodation at the what-d'ye-call-'em arms, and a civil landlord?" This I said by way of saying something, for the man stared very hard at me.

"Very decent accommodation. Ye'll no be for fashing wi' wine, I'm thinking, and there's walth o' porter, ale, and a drap gude whisky—(in an undertone) Fairntosh, if you can get on the lee-side of the gudewife, for there is nae gudeman. They ca' her Christie Steele."

I almost started at the sound. Christie Steele! Christie Steele was my mother's body-servant, her very right hand, and, between ourselves, something like a viceroy over her. I recollected her perfectly; and though she had, in former times, been no favorite of mine, her name now sounded in my ear like that of a friend, and was the first word I had heard somewhat in unison with the associations around me. I sallied from Castle Treddles, determined to make the best of my way to Duntarkin, and my cicerone hung by me for a little way, giving loose to his love of talking—an opportunity which, situated as he was, the seneschal of a deserted castle, was not likely to occur frequently.

"Some folk think," said my companion, "that Mr.

Treddles might as weel have put my wife as Christie Steele into the Treddles Arms, for Christie had been aye in service, and never in the public line, and so it's like she is ganging back in the world, as I hear ; now, my wife had keepit a victualling office."

"That would have been an advantage, certainly," I replied.

"But I am no sure that I wad ha' looten Eppie take it, if they had put it in her offer."

"That's a different consideration."

"Ony way, I wadna ha' liked to have offended Mr. Treddles ; he was a wee toustie when you rubbed him again the hair, but a kind, weel-meaning man."

I wanted to get rid of this species of chat, and finding myself near the entrance of a footpath which made a short cut to Duntarkin, I put half-a-crown into my guide's hand, bade him good-evening, and plunged into the woods.

"Hout, sir—fie, sir—no from the like of you. Stay, sir, ye wunna find the way that gate. Odd's mercy, he maun ken the gate as weel as I do mysell. Weel, I wad like to ken wha the chield is."

Such were the last words of my guide's drowsy, uninteresting tone of voice ; and, glad to be rid of him, I strode out stoutly, in despite of large stones, briers, and "bad steps," which abounded in the road I had chosen. In the interim, I tried as much as I could, with verses from Horace and Prior, and all who have lauded the mixture of literary with rural life, to call back the visions of last night and this morning, imagining myself settled in some detached farm of the estate of Glentanner,

> Which sloping hills around inclose ;
> Where many a birch and brown oak grows ;

when I should have a cottage with a small library, a small cellar, a spare bed for a friend, and live more happy and more honored than when I had the whole barony. But the sight of Castle Treddles had disturbed all my own castles in the air. The realities of the matter, like a stone plashed into a limpid fountain, had destroyed the reflection of the objects around, which, till this act of violence, lay slumbering on the crystal surface, and I tried in vain to re-establish the picture which had been so rudely broken. Well, then I would try it another way : I would try to get Christie Steele out of her public, since she was not thriving in it, and she

who had been my mother's governante should be mine. I knew all her faults, and I told her history over to myself.

She was a grand-daughter, I believe, at least some relative, of the famous Covenanter of the name, whom Dean Swift's friend, Captain Creichton shot on his own staircase in the times of the persecutions,* and had perhaps derived from her native stock much both of its good and evil properties. No one could say of her that she was the life and spirit of the family, though, in my mother's time, she directed all family affiairs; her look was austere and gloomy, and when she was not displeased with you, you could only find it out by her silence. If there was cause for complaint, real or imaginary, Christie was loud enough. She loved my mother with the devoted attachment of a younger sister, but she was as jealous of her favor to any one else as if she had been the aged husband of a coquettish wife, and as severe in her reprehensions as an abbess over her nuns. The command which she exercised over her was that, I fear, of a strong and determined over a feeble and more nervous disposition; and though it was used with rigor, yet, to the best of Christie Steele's belief, she was urging her mistress to her best and most becoming course, and would have died rather than have recommended any other. The attachment of this woman was limited to the family of Croftangry, for she had few relations; and a dissolute cousin, whom late in life she had taken as a husband, had long left her a widow.

To me she had ever a strong dislike. Even from my early childhood she was jealous, strange as it may seem, of my interest in my mother's affections; she saw my foibles and vices with abhorrence, and without a grain of allowance: nor did she pardon the weakness of maternal affection, even when, by the death of two brothers, I came to be the only child of a widowed parent. At the time my disorderly conduct induced my mother to leave Glentanner and retreat to her jointure-house, I always blamed Christie Steele for having influenced her resentment, and prevented her from listening to my vows of amendment, which at times were real and serious, and might, perhaps, have accelerated that change of disposition which has since, I trust, taken place. But Christie regarded me as altogether a doomed and predestinated child of perdition, who was sure to hold on my course, and drag downwards whosoever might attempt to afford me support.

Still, though I knew such had been Christie's prejudices

* See Steele, the Covenanter. Note 18.

against me in other days, yet I thought enough of time had since passed away to destroy all of them. I knew, that when, through the disorder of my affairs, my mother underwent some temporary inconvenience about money matters, Christie as a thing of course, stood in the gap, and having sold a small inheritance which had descended to her, brought the purchase money to her mistress, with a sense of devotion as deep as that which inspired the Christians of the first age, when they sold all they had and followed the apostles of the church. I therefore thought that we might, in old Scottish phrase, "let byeganes be byeganes," and begin upon a new account. Yet I resolved, like a skilful general, to reconnoiter a little before laying down any precise scheme of proceeding, and in the interim I determined to preserve my incognito.

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CHAPTER IV

MR. CROFTANGRY BIDS ADIEU TO CLYDESDALE

Alas, how changed from what it once had been!
'Twas now degraded to a common inn.
GAY.

AN hour's brisk walking, or thereabouts, placed me in front of Duntarkin, which had also, I found, undergone considerable alterations, though it had not been altogether demolished like the principal mansion. An inn-yard extended before the door of the decent little jointure-house, even amidst the remnants of the holly hedges which had screened the lady's garden. Then a broad, raw-looking, new-made road intruded itself up the little glen, instead of the old horseway, so seldom used that it was almost entirely covered with grass. It is a great enormity of which gentlemen trustees on the highways are sometimes guilty, in adopting the breadth necessary for an avenue to the metropolis, where all that is required is an access to some sequestered and unpopulous district. I do not say anything of the expense, that the trustees and their constituents may settle as they please. But the destruction of sylvan beauty is great, when the breadth of the road is more than proportioned to the vale through which it runs, and lowers of course the consequence of any objects of wood or water, or broken and varied ground, which might otherwise attract notice and give pleasure. A bubbling runnel by the side of one of these modern Appian or Flaminian highways is but like a kennel, the little hill is diminished to a hillock, the romantic hillock to a mole-hill, almost too small for sight.

Such an enormity, however, had destroyed the quiet loneliness of Duntarkin,* and intruded its breadth of dust and gravel, and its associations of "pochays" and mail-coaches, upon one of the most sequestered spots in the Middle Ward of Clydesdale. The house was old and dilapidated, and

* Mr. Lockhart informs us that this demesne is sketched from that of Carmichael, the ancient mansion of the noble family of Hyndford (*Laing*).

looked sorry for itself, as if sensible of a derogation ; but the sign was strong and new, and brightly painted, displaying a heraldic shield, three shuttles in a field diapré, a web partly unfolded for crest, and two stout giants for supporters, each one holding a weaver's beam proper. To have displayed this monstrous emblem on the front of the house might have hazarded bringing down the wall, but for certain would have blocked up one or two windows. It was therefore established independent of the mansion, being displayed in an iron framework, and suspended upon two posts, with as much wood and iron about it as would have builded a brig ; and there it hung, creaking, groaning and screaming in every blast of wind, and frightening for five miles' distance, for aught I know, the nests of thrushes and linnets, the ancient denizens of the little glen.

When I entered the place I was received by Christie Steele herself, who seemed uncertain whether to drop me in the kitchen or usher me into a separate apartment. As I called for tea, with something rather more substantial than bread and butter, and spoke of supping and sleeping, Christie at last inducted me into the room where she herself had been sitting, probably the only one which had a fire, though the month was October. This answered my plan ; and, as she was about to remove her spinning-wheel, I begged she would have the goodness to remain and make my tea, adding, that I liked the sound of the wheel, and desired not to disturb her housewife thrift in the least.

"I dinna ken, sir," she replied, in a dry *revêche* tone, which carried me back twenty years, "I am nane of thae heartsome landleddies that can tell country cracks, and make themsells agreeable ; and I was ganging to pit on a fire for you in the Red Room ; but if it is your will to stay here, he that pays the lawing maun choose the lodging."

I endeavored to engage her in conversation ; but though she answered with a kind of stiff civility, I could get her into no freedom of discourse, and she began to look at her wheel and at the door more than once, as if she meditated a retreat. I was obliged therefore to proceed to some special questions that might have interest for a person whose ideas were probably of a very bounded description.

I looked round the apartment, being the same in which I had last seen my poor mother. The author of the family history, formerly mentioned, had taken great credit to himself for the improvements he had made in this same jointurehouse of Duntarkin. and how, upon his marriage, when

his mother took possession of the same as her jointure-house, "to his great charges and expenses he caused box the walls of the great parlor (in which I was now sitting), empanel the same, and plaster the roof, finishing the apartment with ane concave chimney, and decorating the same with pictures, and a barometer and thermometer." And in particular, which his good mother used to say she prized above all the rest, he had caused his own portraiture be limned over the mantelpiece by a skilful hand. And in good faith, there he remained still, having much the visage which I was disposed to ascribe to him on the evidence of his handwriting—grim and austere, yet not without a cast of shrewdness and determination; in armor, though he never wore it, I fancy; one hand on an open book, and one resting on the hilt of his sword, though I daresay his head never ached with reading nor his limbs with fencing.

"That picture is painted on the wood, madam," said I.

"Ay, sir, or its like it would not have been left there. They took a' they could."

"Mr. Treddle's creditors, you mean?" said I.

"Na," replied she drily, "the creditors of another family, that sweepit cleaner than this poor man's, because I fancy there was less to gather."

"An older family, perhaps, and probably more remembered and regretted than later possessors."

Christie here settled herself in her seat, and pulled her wheel towards her. I had given her something interesting for her thoughts to dwell upon, and her wheel was a mechanical accompaniment on such occasions, the revolutions of which assisted her in the explanation of her ideas.

"Mair regretted—mair missed! I liked ane of the auld family very weel, but I winna say that for them a'. How should they be mair missed than the Treddleses? The cotton mill was such a thing for the country! The mair bairns a cottar body had the better: they would make their awn keep frae the time they were five years auld; and a widow wi' three or four bairns was a wealthy woman in the time of the Treddleses."

"But the health of these poor children, my good friend—their education and religious instruction——"

"For health," said Christie, looking gloomily at me, "ye maun ken little of the warld, sir, if ye dinna ken that the health of the poor man's body, as weel as his youth and his strength, are all at the command of the rich man's purse. There never was a trade so unhealthy yet, but men would

fight to get wark at it, for twa pennies a day aboon the common wage. But the bairns were reasonably weel cared for in the way of air and exercise, and a very responsible youth heard them their carritch, and gied them lessons in Reediemadeasy.* Now, what did they ever get before? Maybe on a winter day they wad be called out to beat the wood for cocks or sic-like, and then the starving weans would maybe get a bite of broken bread, and maybe no, just as the butler was in humor—that was a' they got."

"They were not, then, a very kind family to the poor, these old possessors?" said I, somewhat bitterly; for I had expected to hear my ancestors' praises recorded, though I certainly despaired of being regaled with my own.

"They werena ill to them, sir, and that is aye something. They were just decent bien bodies: ony poor creature that had face to beg got an awmous and welcome; they that were shame-faced gaed by, and twice as welcome. But they keepit an honest walk before God and man, the Croftangrys, and, as I said before, if they did little good, they did as little ill. They lifted their rents and spent them, called in their kain and eat them, gaed to the kirk of a Sunday, bowed civilly if folk took aff their bannets as they gaed by, and lookit as black as sin at them that keepit them on."

"These are their arms that you have on the sign?"

"What! on the painted board that is skirling and groaning at the door? Na, these are Mr. Treddles's arms, though they look as like legs as arms; ill-pleased I was at the fule thing, that cost as muckle as would hae repaired the house from the wa' stane to the rigging-tree. But if I am to bide here, I'll hae a decent board wi' a punch-bowl on it."

"Is there a doubt of your staying here, Mrs. Steele?"

"Dinna mistress me," said the cross old woman, whose fingers were now plying their thrift in a manner which indicated nervous irritation: "there was nae luck in the land since Luckie turned Mistress, and Mistress my Leddy; and as for staying here, if it concern you to ken, I may stay if I can pay a hundred pund sterling for the lease, and I may flit if I canna, and so gude-e'en to you, Christie," and round went the wheel with much activity.

"And you like the trade of keeping a public-house?"

"I can scarce say that," she replied. "But worthy Mr. Prendergast is clear of its lawfulness, and I hae gotten used to it, and made a decent living, though I never make out a

* "Reading made Easy," usually so pronounced in Scotland.

fause reckoning, or give ony ane the means to disorder reason in my house."

"Indeed!" said I; "in that case there is no wonder you have not made up the hundred pounds to purchase the lease."

"How do you ken," said she, sharply, "that I might not have had a hundred punds of my ain fee? If I have it not, I am sure it is my ain faut; and I wunna ca' it faut neither, for it gaed to her wha was weel entitled to a' my service." Again she pulled stoutly at the flax, and the wheel went smartly round.

"This old gentlemen," said I, fixing my eye on the painted panel, seems to have had *his* arms painted as well as Mr. Treddles—that is, if that painting in the corner be a scutcheon."

"Ay—ay, cushion, just sae, they maun a' hae their cushions: there's sma' gentry without that; and so the arms, as they ca' them, of the house of Glentanner may be seen on an auld stane in the west end of the house. But to do them justice, they didna propale sae muckle about them as poor Mr. Treddles did; it's like they were better used to them."

"Very likely. Are there any of the old family in life, goodwife?"

"No," she replied; then added, after a moment's hesitation—"not that I know of," and the wheel, which had intermitted, began again to revolve.

"Gone abroad, perhaps?" I suggested.

She now looked up and faced me. "No, sir. There were three sons of the last laird of Glentanner, as he was then called; John and William were hopeful young gentlemen, but they died early—one of a decline, brought on by the mizzles, the other lost his life in a fever. It would hae been lucky for mony ane that Chrystal had gane the same gate."

"Oh! he must have been the young spendthrift that sold the property? Well, but you should not have such an ill-will against him: remember, necessity has no law; and then, goodwife, he was not more culpable than Mr. Treddles, whom you are so sorry for."

"I wish I could think sae, sir, for his mother's sake; but Mr. Treddles was in trade, and though he had no preceese right to do so, yet there was some warrant for a man being expensive that imagined he was making a mint of money. But this unhappy lad devoured his patrimony, when he kenned that he was living like a ratten in a Dunlap cheese, and diminishing his means at a' hands. I canna bide to

think on't." With this she broke out into a snatch of a ballad; but little of mirth was there either in the tone or the expression:—

> "For he did spend, and make an end
> Of gear that his forefathers wan;
> Of land and ware he made him bare,
> So speak nae mair of the auld gudeman."

"Come, dame," said I, "it is a long lane that has no turning. I will not keep from you that I have heard something of this poor fellow, Chrystal Croftangry. He has sown his wild oats, as they say, and has settled into a steady respectable man."

"And wha tell'd ye that tidings?" said she, looking sharply at me.

"Not perhaps the best judge in the world of his character, for it was himself, dame."

"And if he tell'd you truth, it was a virtue he did not aye use to practise," said Christie.

"The devil!" said I, considerably nettled; "all the world held him to be a man of honor."

"Ay—ay! he would hae shot onybody wi' his pistols and his guns that have evened him to be a liar. But if he promised to pay an honest tradesman the next term-day, did he keep his word then? And if he promised a puir silly lass to make gude her shame, did he speak truth then? And what is that but being a liar, and a black-hearted deceitful liar to boot?"

My indignation was rising, but I strove to suppress it; indeed, I should only have afforded my tormentor a triumph by an angry reply. I partly suspected she began to recognize me; yet she testified so little emotion, that I could not think my suspicion well founded. I went on, therefore, to say, in a tone as indifferent as I could command, "Well, goodwife, I see you will believe no good of this Chrystal of yours till he comes back and buys a good farm on the estate, and makes you his housekeeper."

The old woman dropped her thread, folded her hands, as she looked up to heaven with a face of apprehension. "The Lord," she exclaimed, "forbid! The Lord in His mercy forbid! Oh, sir! if you really know this unlucky man, persuade him to settle where folk ken the good that you say he has come to, and dinna ken the evil of his former days. He used to be proud enough—O dinna let him come here, even for his own sake. He used ance to have some pride."

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Here she once more drew the wheel close to her, and began to pull at the flax with both hands. "Dinna let him come here, to be looked down upon by ony that may be left of his auld reiving companions, and to see the decent folk that he looked over his nose at look over their noses at him, baith at kirk and market. Dinna let him come to his ain country to be made a tale about when ony neighbor points him out to another, and tells what he is, and what he was, and how he wrecked a dainty estate, and brought harlots to the door-cheek of his father's house, till he made it nae residence for his mother; and how it had been foretauld by a servant of his ain house that he was a ne'er-do weel, and a child of perdition, and how her words were made good, and——"

"Stop there, goodwife, if you please," said I; "you have said as much as I can well remember, and more than it may be safe to repeat. I can use a great deal of freedom with the gentleman we speak of; but I think, were any other person to carry him half of your message, I would scarce ensure his personal safety. And now, as I see the night is settled to be a fine one, I will walk on to——, where I must meet a coach to-morrow, as it passes to Edinburgh."

So saying, I paid my moderate reckoning, and took my leave, without being able to discover whether the prejudiced and hard-hearted old woman did, or did not, suspect the identity of her guest with the Chrystal Croftangry against whom she harbored so much dislike.

The night was fine and frosty, though, when I pretended to see what its character was, it might have rained like the deluge. I only made the excuse to escape from old Christie Steele. The horses which run races in the Corso at Rome without any riders, in order to stimulate their exertion, carry each his own spurs, namely, small balls of steel, with sharp projecting spikes, which are attached to loose straps of leather, and, flying about in the violence of the agitation, keep the horse to his speed by pricking him as they strike against his flanks. The old woman's reproaches had the same effect on me, and urged me to a rapid pace, as if it had been possible to escape from my own recollections. In the best days of my life, when I won one or two hard walking-matches, I doubt if I ever walked so fast as I did betwixt the Treddles Arms and the borough town for which I was bound. Though the night was cold, I was warm enough by the time I got to my inn; and it required a refreshing draught of porter, with half an hour's repose,

ere I could determine to give no farther thought to Christie and her opinions than those of any other vulgar, prejudiced old woman. I resolved at last to treat the thing *en bagatelle,* and, calling for writing-materials, I folded up a check for £100, with these lines on the envelope:

> "Chrystal, the ne'er-do-weel,
> Child destined to the deil,
> Sends this to Christie Steele."

And I was so much pleased with this new mode of viewing the subject, that I regretted the lateness of the hour prevented my finding a person to carry the letter express to its destination.

But with the morning cool reflection came.

I considered that the money, and probably more, was actually due by me on my mother's account to Christie, who had lent it in a moment of great necessity, and that the returning it in a light or ludicrous manner was not unlikely to prevent so touchy and punctilious a person from accepting a debt which was most justly her due, and which it became me particularly to see satisfied. Sacrificing, then, my triad with little regret, for it looked better by candlelight, and through the medium of a pot of porter, than it did by daylight, and with bohea for a menstruum, I determined to employ Mr. Fairscribe's mediation in buying up the lease of the little inn, and conferring it upon Christie in the way which should make it most acceptable to her feelings. It is only necessary to add, that my plan succeeded, and that Widow Steele even yet keeps the Treddles Arms. Do not say, therefore, that I have been disingenuous with you, reader; since, if I have not told all the ill of myself I might have done, I have indicated to you a person able and willing to supply the blank, by relating all my delinquencies, as well as my misfortunes.

In the mean time, I totally abandoned the idea of redeeming any part of my paternal property, and resolved to take Christie Steele's advice, as young Norval does Glenalvon's, "although it sounded harshly."

Here she once more drew the wheel close to her, and began to pull at the flax with both hands. "Dinna let him come here, to be looked down upon by ony that may be left of his auld reiving companions, and to see the decent folk that he looked over his nose at look over their noses at him, baith at kirk and market. Dinna let him come to his ain country to be made a tale about when ony neighbor points him out to another, and tells what he is, and what he was, and how he wrecked a dainty estate, and brought harlots to the door-cheek of his father's house, till he made it nae residence for his mother; and how it had been foretauld by a servant of his ain house that he was a ne'er-do weel, and a child of perdition, and how her words were made good, and——"

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CHAPTER V

MR. CROFTANGRY SETTLES IN THE CANOGATE

If you will know my house,
" Tis at the tuft of olives here hard by.
As You Like It.

By a revolution of humor which I am unable to account for, I changed my mind entirely on my plans of life, in consequence of the disappointment the history of which fills the last chapter. I began to discover that the country would not at all suit me; for I had relinquished field-sports, and felt no inclination whatever to farming. the ordinary vocation of country gentlemen; besides that, I had no talent for assisting either candidate in case of an expected election, and saw no amusement in the duties of a road trustee, a commissioner of supply, or even in the magisterial functions of the bench. I had begun to take some taste for reading; and a domiciliation in the country must remove me from the use of books, excepting the small subscription library, in which the very book which you want is uniformly sure to be engaged.

I resolved, therefore, to make the Scottish metropolis my regular resting-place, reserving to myself to take occasionally those excursions which, spite of all I have said against mail-coaches, Mr. Piper has rendered so easy. Friend of our life and of our leisure, he secures by despatch against loss of time, and by the best of coaches, cattle, and steadiest of drivers against hazard of limb, and wafts us, as well as our letters, from Edinburgh to Cape Wrath in the penning of a paragraph.

When my mind was quite made up to make Auld Reekie my headquarters, reserving the privilege of exploring in all directions, I began to explore in good earnest for the purpose of discovering a suitable habitation. "And whare trew ye I gaed?" as Sir Pertinax says. Not to George's Square, nor to Charlotte Square, nor to the old New Town, nor to the new New Town, nor to the Calton Hill—I went to the Canongate, and to the very portion of the Canongate in which

I had formerly been immured, like the errant knight, prisoner in some enchanted castle, where spells have made the ambient air impervious to the unhappy captive, although the organs of sight encountered no obstacle to his free passage.

Why I should have thought of pitching my tent here I cannot tell. Perhaps it was to enjoy the pleasures of freedom, where I had so long endured the bitterness of restraint; on the principle of the officer who, after he had retired from the army, ordered his servant to continue to call him at the hour of parade, simply that he might have the pleasure of saying—"D—n the parade!" and turning to the other side to enjoy his slumbers. Or perhaps I expected to find in the vicinity some little old-fashioned house, having somewhat of the *rus in urbe* which I was ambitious of enjoying. Enough, I went, as aforesaid, to the Canongate.

I stood by the kennel, of which I have formerly spoken, and, my mind being at ease, my bodily organs were more delicate. I was more sensible than heretofore that, like the trade of Pompey in *Measure for Measure*, it did in some sort——"pah, an ounce of civet, good apothecary!" Turning from thence, my steps naturally directed themselves to my own humble apartment, where my little Highland landlady, as dapper and as tight as ever (for old women wear a hundred times better than the hard-wrought seniors of the masculine sex), stood at the door, "teedling" to herself a Highland song as she shook a table-napkin over the forestair, and then proceeded to fold it up neatly for future service.

"How do you, Janet?"

"Thank ye, good sir," answered my old friend, without looking at me; "but ye might as weel say Mrs. MacEvoy, for she is na a'body's Shanet—umph."

"You must be *my* Janet, though, for all that. Have you forgot me? Do you not remember Chrystal Croftangry?"

The light kind-hearted creature threw her napkin into the open door, skipped down the stair like a fairy, three steps at once, seized me by the hands—both hands—jumped up, and actually kissed me. I was a little ashamed; but what swain, of somewhere inclining to sixty, could resist the advances of a fair contemporary? So we allowed the full degree of kindness to the meeting—*honi soit qui mal y pense*—and then Janet entered instantly upon business. "An' ye'll gae in, man, and see your auld lodgings, nae doubt, and Shanet will pay ye the fifteen shillings of change

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that ye ran away without, and without bidding Shanet good day. But never mind (nodding good-humoredly), Shanet saw you were carried for the time."

By this time we were in my old quarters, and Janet, with her bottle of cordial in one hand and the glass in the other, had forced on me a dram of usqebaugh, distilled with saffron and other herbs, after some old-fashioned Highland receipt. Then was unfolded, out of many a little scrap of paper, the reserved sum of fifteen shillings, which Janet had treasured for twenty years and upwards.

"Here they are," she said, in honest triumph, "just the same I was holding out to ye when ye ran as if ye had been fey. Shanet has had siller, and Shanet has wanted siller, mony a time since that; and the gauger has come, and the factor has come, and the butcher and baker—Cot bless us! —just like to tear poor auld Shanet to pieces, but she took good care of Mr. Croftangry's fifteen shillings.

"But what if I had never come back, Janet?"

"Och, if Shanet had heard you were dead, she would hae gien it to the poor of the chapel, to pray for Mr. Croftangry," said Janet, crossing herself, for she was a Catholic. "You maybe do not think it would do you cood, but the blessing of the poor can never do no harm."

I agreed heartily in Janet's conclusion; and, as to have desired her to consider the hoard as her own property would have been an indelicate return to her for the uprightness of her conduct, I requested her to dispose of it as she had proposed to do in the event of my death—that is, if she knew any poor people of merit to whom it might be useful.

"Ower mony of them," raising the corner of her checked apron to her eyes—"e'en ower mony of them, Mr. Croftangry. Och, ay, there is the puir Highland creatures frae Glenshee, that cam down for the harvest, and are lying wi' the fever—five shillings to them; and half-a-crown to Bessie MacEvoy, whose coodman, puir creature, died of the frost, being a shairman, for a' the whiskey he could drink to keep it out o' his stamoch; and——"

But she suddenly interrupted the bead-roll of her proposed charities, and assuming a very sage look, and primming up her little chattering mouth, she went on in a different tone—"But, och, Mr. Croftangry, bethink ye whether ye will not need a' this siller yoursell, and maybe look back and think lang for ha'en kiven it away, whilk is a creat sin to forthink a wark o' charity, and also is unlucky,

and moreover is not the thought of a shentleman's son like yoursell, dear. And I say this, that ye may think a bit, for your mother's son kens that ye are no so careful as you should be of the gear, and I hae tauld ye of it before, jewel."

I assured her I could easily spare the money, without risk of future repentance; and she went on to infer that, in such a case, "Mr. Croftangry had grown a rich man in foreign parts, and was free of his troubles with messengers and sheriff-officers, and sic-like scum of the earth; and Shanet MacEvoy's mother's daughter be a blythe woman to hear it. But if Mr. Croftangry was in trouble, there was his room, and his ped, and Shanet to wait on him, and tak payment when it was quite convenient."

I explained to Janet my situation, in which she expressed unqualified delight. I then proceeded to inquire into her own circumstances, and, though she spoke cheerfully and contentedly, I could see they were precarious. I had paid more than was due; other lodgers fell into an opposite error, and forgot to pay Janet at all. Then, Janet being ignorant of all indirect modes of screwing money out of her lodgers, others in the same line of life, who were sharper than the poor simple Highlandwoman, were enabled to let their apartments cheaper in appearnce, though the inmates usually found them twice as dear in the long run.

As I had already destined my old landlady to be my housekeeper and governante, knowing her honesty, good-nature, and, although a Scotchwoman, her cleanliness and excellent temper, saving the short and hasty expressions of anger which Highlanders call a "fuff," I now proposed the plan to her in such a way as was likely to make it most acceptable. Very acceptable as the proposal was, as I could plainly see, Janet, however, took a day to consider upon it; and her reflections against our next meeting had suggested only one objection, which was singular enough.

"My honor," so she now termed me, "would pe for biding in some fine street apout the town; now Shanet wad ill like to live in a place where polish, and sheriffs, and bailiffs, and sic thieves and trash of the world, could tak puir shentlemen by the throat, just because they wanted a wheen dollars in the sporran. She had lived in the bonny glen of Tomanthoulick—Cot, an ony of the vermint had come there, her father wad hae wared a shot on them, and he could hit a buck within as mony measured yards as e'er a man of his clan. And the place here was so quiet frae them, they durst

na put their nose ower the gutter. Shanet owed nobody a boddle, put she couldna pide to see honest folk and pretty shentlemen forced away to prison whether they would or no; and then if Shanet was to lay her tangs ower ane of the ragamuffins' heads, it would be, maybe, that the law would gie't a hard name."

One thing I have learned in life—never to speak sense when nonsense will answer the purpose as well. I should have had great difficulty to convince this practical and disinterested admirer and vindicator of liberty that arrests seldom or never were to be seen in the streets of Edinburgh, and to satisfy her of their justice and necessity would have been as difficult as to convert her to the Protestant faith. I therefore assured her, my intention, if I could get a suitable habitation, was to remain in the quarter where she at present dwelt. Janet gave three skips on the floor, and uttered as many short, shrill yells of joy; yet doubt almost instantly returned, and she insisted on knowing what possible reason I could have for making my residence where few lived, save those whose misfortunes drove them thither. It occurred to me to answer her by recounting the legend of the rise of my family, and of our deriving our name from a particular place near Holyrood Palace. This, which would have appeared to most people a very absurd reason for choosing a residence, was entirely satisfactory to Janet MacEvoy.

"Och, nae doubt! if it was the land of her fathers, there was nae mair to be said. Put it was queer that her family estate should just lie at the town tail, and covered with houses, where the king's cows, Cot bless them hide and horn! used to craze upon. It was strange changes." She mused a little, and then added, "Put it is something better wi' Croftangry when the changes is frae the field to the habited place, and not from the place of habitation to the desert; for Shanet, her nainsell, kent a glen where there were men as weel as there may be in Croftangry, and if there werena altogether sae mony of them, they were as good men in their tartan as the others in their broadcloth. And there were houses too, and if they were not biggit with stane and lime, and lofted like the houses at Croftangry, yet they served the purpose of them that lived there; and mony a braw bonnet, and mony a silk snood, and comely white curch would come out to gang to kirk or chapel on the Lord's day, and little bairns toddling after; and now—och, och, ohellany, ohonari! the glen is desolate, and the braw snoods and bonnets are gane, and the Saxon's house stands

dull and lonely, like the single bare-breasted rock that the falcon builds on—the falcon that drives the heath-bird frae the glen."

Janet, like many Highlanders, was full of imagination; and, when melancholy themes came upon her, expressed herself almost poetically, owing to the genius of the Celtic language in which she thought, and in which, doubtless, she would have spoken, had I understood Gaelic. In two minutes the shade of gloom and regret had passed from her good-humored features, and she was again the little busy, prating, important old woman, undisputed owner of one flat of a small tenement in the Abbey Yard, and about to be promoted to be housekeeper to an elderly bachelor gentleman, Chrystal Croftangry, Esq.

It was not long before Janet's local researches found out exactly the sort of place I wanted, and there we settled. Janet was afraid I would not be satisfied, because it is not exactly part of Croftangry; but I stopped her doubts, by assuring her it had been part and pendicle thereof in my forefathers' time, which passed very well.

I do not intend to possess any one with an exact knowledge of my lodging; though, as Bobadil says, "I care not who knows it, since the cabin is convenient." But I may state in general, that it is a house "within itself," or, according to a newer phraseology in advertisements, "self-contained," has a garden of near half an acre, and a patch of ground with trees in front. It boasts five rooms and servants' apartments, looks in front upon the palace, and from behind towards the hill and crags of the King's Park. Fortunately the place had a name, which, with a little improvement, served to countenance the legend which I had imposed on Janet, and would not perhaps have been sorry if I had been able to impose on myself. It was called Littlecroft; we have dubbed it Little Croftangry, and the men of letters belonging to the Post-Office have sanctioned the change, and deliver letters so addressed. Thus I am to all intents and purposes Chrystal Croftangry of that Ilk.

My establishment consists of Janet, an under maid-servant, and a Highland wench for Janet to exercise her Gaelic upon, with a handy lad who can lay the cloth, and take care besides of a pony, on which I find my way to Portobello sands, especially when the cavalry have a drill; for, like an old fool as I am, I have not altogether become indifferent to the tramp of horses and the flash of weapons, of which, though no professional soldier, it has been my fate to see something

in my youth. For wet mornings, I have my book ; is it fine weather, I visit, or I wander on the Crags, as the humor dictates. My dinner is indeed solitary, yet not quite so neither ; for, though Andrew waits, Janet, or—as she is to all the world but her master and certain old Highland gossips —Mrs. MacEvoy, attends, bustles about, and desires to see everything is in first-rate order, and to tell me, Cot pless us, the wonderful news of the palace for the day. When the cloth is removed, and I light my cigar, and begin to husband a pint of port, or a glass of old whisky and water, it is the rule of the house that Janet takes a chair at some distance, and nods or works her stocking, as she may be disposed ; ready to speak if I am in the talking humor, and sitting quiet as a mouse if I am rather inclined to study a book or the newspaper. At six precisely she makes my tea, and leaves me to drink it ; and then occurs an interval of time which most old bachelors find heavy on their hands. The theater is a good occasional resource, especial if Will Murray acts, or a bright star of eminence shines forth ; but it is distant, and so are one or two public societies to which I belong ; besides, these evening walks are all incompatible with the elbow-chair feeling, which desires some employment that may divert the mind without fatiguing the body.

Under the influence of these impressions, I have sometimes thought of this literary undertaking. I must have been the Bonassus himself to have mistaken myself for a genius, yet I have leisure and reflections like my neighbors. I am a borderer also between two generations, and can point out more perhaps than others of those fading traces of antiquity which are daily vanishing ; and I know many a modern instance and many an old tradition, and therefore I ask—

> What ails me, I may not, as well as they,
> Rake up some threadbare tales, that moldering lay
> In chimney corners, wont by Christmas fires
> To read and rock to sleep our ancient sires?
> No man his threshold better knows than I
> Brute's first arrival and first victory,
> St. George's sorrel and his cross of blood,
> Arthur's round board and Caledonian wood.

No shop is so easily set up as an antiquary's. Like those of the lowest order of pawnbrokers, a commodity of rusty iron, a bag or two of hobnails, a few odd shoe-buckles, cashiered kail-pots, and fire-irons declared incapable of service are quite sufficient to set him up. If he add a sheaf or two

of penny ballads and broadsides, he is a great man—an extensive trader. And then, like the pawnbrokers aforesaid, if the author understands a little legerdemain, he may, by dint of a little picking and stealing, make the inside of his shop a great deal richer than the out, and be able to show you things which cause those who do not understand the antiquarian trick of clean conveyance to wonder how the devil he came by them.

It may be said, that antiquarian articles interest but few customers, and that we may bawl ourselves as rusty as the wares we deal in without any one asking the price of our merchandise. But I do not rest my hopes upon this department of my labors only. I propose also to have a corresponding shop for sentiment, and dialogues, and disquisition, which may captivate the fancy of those who have no relish, as the established phrase goes, for pure antiquity—a sort of greengrocer's stall erected in front of my ironmongery wares, garlanding the rusty memorials of ancient times with cresses, cabbages, leeks, and water-purpie.

As I have some idea that I am writing too well to be understood, I humble myself to ordinary language, and aver, with becoming modesty, that I do think myself capable of sustaining a publication of a miscellaneous nature, as like to *The Spectator* or *The Guardian*, *The Mirror* or *The Lounger*, as my poor abilities may be able to accomplish. Not that I have any purpose of imitating Johnson, whose general learning and power of expression I do not deny, but many of whose *Rambles* are little better than a sort of pageant, where trite and obvious maxims are made to swagger in lofty and mystic language, and get some credit only because they are not easily understood. There are some of the great moralist's papers which I cannot peruse without thinking on a second-rate masquerade, where the best-known and least-esteemed characters in town march in as heroes, and sultans, and so forth, and, by dint of tawdry dresses, get some consideration until they are found out. It is not, however, prudent to commence with throwing stones, just when I am striking out windows of my own.

I think even the local situation of Little Croftangry may be considered as favorable to my undertaking. A nobler contrast there can hardly exist than that of the huge city, dark with the smoke of ages, and groaning with the various sounds of active industry or idle revel, and the lofty and craggy hill, silent and solitary as the grave ; one exhibiting the full tide of existence, pressing and precipitating itself

forward with the force of an inundation; the other resembling some time-worn anchorite, whose life passes as silent and unobserved as the slender rill which escapes unheard, and scarce seen, from the fountain of his patron saint. The city resembles the busy temple, where the modern Comus and Mammon hold their courts, and thousands sacrifice ease, independence, and virtue itself at their shrine; the misty and lonely mountain seems as a throne to the majestic but terrible genius of feudal times, when the same divinities dispensed coronets and domains to those who had heads to devise and arms to execute bold enterprises.

I have, as it were, the two extremities of the moral world at my threshold. From the front door, a few minutes' walk brings me into the heart of a wealthy and populous city; as many paces from my opposite entrance place me in a solitude as complete as Zimmermann could have desired. Surely, with such aids to my imagination, I may write better than if I were in a lodging in the New Town or a garret in the old. As the Spaniard says, "*Viamos, caracco!*"

I have not chosen to publish periodically, my reason for which was twofold. In the first place, I don't like to be hurried, and have had enough of duns in an early part of my life to make me reluctant to hear of or see one, even in the less awful shape of a printer's devil. But, secondly, a periodical paper is not easily extended in circulation beyond the quarter in which it is published. This work, if published in fugitive numbers, would scarce, without a high pressure on the part of the bookseller, be raised above the Netherbrow, and never could be expected to ascend to the level of Princess Street. Now I am ambitious that my compositions, though having their origin in this valley of Holyrood, should not only be extended into those exalted regions I have mentioned, but also that they should cross the Forth, astonish the long town of Kirkcaldy, enchant the skippers and colliers of the east of Fife, venture even into the classic arcades of St. Andrews, and travel as much farther to the north as the breath of applause will carry their sails. As for a southward direction, it is not to be hoped for in my fondest dreams. I am informed that Scottish literature, like Scottish whisky, will be presently laid under a prohibitory duty. But enough of this. If any reader is dull enough not to comprehend the advantage which, in point of circulation, a compact book has over a collection of fugitive numbers, let him try the range of a gun loaded with hail-shot, against that of the same piece

charged with an equal weight of lead consolidated in a single bullet.

Besides, it was of less consequence that I should have published periodically, since I did not mean to solicit or accept of the contributions of friends, or the criticisms of those who may be less kindly disposed. Notwithstanding the excellent examples which might be quoted, I will establish no begging-box, either under the name of a lion's head or an ass's. What is good or ill shall be mine own, or the contribution of friends to whom I may have private access. Many of my voluntary assistants might be cleverer than myself, and then I should have a brilliant article appear among my chiller effusions, like a patch of lace on a Scottish cloak of Galashiels gray. Some might be worse, and then I must reject them, to the injury of the feelings of the writer, or else insert them, to make my own darkness yet more opaque and palpable. "Let every herring," says our old-fashioned proverb, "hang by its own head."

One person, however, I may distinguish, as she is now no more, who, living to the utmost term of human life, honored me with a great share of her friendship, as indeed we were blood-relatives in the Scottish sense—Heaven knows how many degrees removed—and friends in the sense of Old England. I mean the late excellent and regretted Mrs. Bethune Baliol. But as I design this admirable picture of the olden time for a principal character in my work, I will only say here, that she knew and approved of my present purpose; and though she declined to contribute to it while she lived, from a sense of dignified retirement, which she thought became her age, sex, and condition in life, she left me some materials for carrying on my proposed work, which I coveted when I heard her detail them in conversation, and which now, when I have their substance in her own handwriting, I account far more valuable than anything I have myself to offer. I hope the mentioning her name in conjunction with my own will give no offense to any of her numerous friends, as it was her own express pleasure that I should employ the manuscripts, which she did me the honor to bequeath me, in the manner in which I have now used them. It must be added, however, that in most cases I have disguised names, and in some have added shading and coloring to bring out the narrative.

Much of my materials, besides these, are derived from friends, living or dead. The accuracy of some of these may be doubtful, in which case I shall be happy to receive, from

sufficient authority, the correction of the errors which must creep into traditional documents. The object of the whole publication is, to throw some light on the manners of Scotland as they were, and to contrast them, occasionally, with those of the present day. My own opinions are in favor of our own times in many respects, but not in so far as affords means for exercising the imagination, or exciting the interest which attaches to other times. I am glad to be a writer or a reader in 1826, but I would be most interested in reading or relating what happened from half a century to a century before. We have the best of it. Scenes in which our ancestors thought deeply, acted fiercely, and died desperately are to us tales to divert the tedium of a winter's evening, when we are engaged to no party, or beguile a summer's morning, when it is too scorching to ride or walk.

Yet I do not mean that my essays and narratives should be limited to Scotland. I pledge myself to no particular line of subjects; but, on the contrary, say with Burns,

> Perhaps it may turn out a sang,
> Perhaps turn out a sermon.

I have only to add, by way of postscript to these preliminary chapters, that I have had recourse to Molière's recipe, and read my manuscript over to my old woman, Janet MacEvoy.

The dignity of being consulted delighted Janet; and Wilkie or Allan would have made a capital sketch of her, as she sat upright in her chair, instead of her ordinary lounging posture, knitting her stocking systematically, as if she meant every twist of her thread and inclination of the wires to bear burden to the cadence of my voice. I am afraid, too, that I myself felt more delight than I ought to have done in my own composition, and read a little more oratorically than I should have ventured to do before an auditor of whose applause I was not so secure. And the result did not entirely encourage my plan of censorship. Janet did indeed seriously incline to the account of my previous life, and bestowed some Highland maledictions more emphatic than courteous on Christie Steele's reception of a "shentlemans in distress," and of her own mistress's house too. I omitted for certain reasons, or greatly abridged, what related to herself. But when I came to treat of my general views in publication, I saw poor Janet was entirely thrown out, though, like a jaded hunter, pant-

ing, puffing, and short of wind, she endeavored at least to keep up with the chase. Or rather her perplexity made her look all the while like a deaf person ashamed of his infirmity, who does not understand a word you are saying, yet desires you to believe that he does understand you, and who is extremely jealous that you suspect his incapacity. When she saw that some remark was necessary, she resembled exactly in her criticism the devotee who pitched on the "sweet word Mesopotamia" as the most edifying note which she could bring away from a sermon. She indeed hastened to bestow general praise on what she said was "all very fine"; but chiefly dwelt on what I had said about Mr. Timmerman, as she was pleased to call the German philosopher, and supposed he must be of the same descent with the Highland clan of M'Intyre, which signifies Son of the Carpenter. "And a fery honorable name too—Shanet's own mither was a M'Intyre."

In short, it was plain the latter part of my introduction was altogether lost on poor Janet; and so, to have acted up to Molière's system, I should have canceled the whole, and written it anew. But I do not know how it is; I retained, I suppose, some tolerable opinion of my own composition, though Janet did not comprehend it, and felt loth to retrench those delilahs of the imagination, as Dryden calls them, the tropes and figures of which are caviar to the multitude. Besides, I hate rewriting as much as Falstaff did paying back: it is a double labor. So I determined with myself to consult Janet, in future, only on such things as were within the limits of her comprehension, and hazard my arguments and my rhetoric on the public without her imprimatur. I am pretty sure she will "applaud it done." And in such narratives as come within her range of thought and feeling, I shall, as I first intended, take the benefit of her unsophisticated judgment, and attend to it deferentially —that is, when it happens not to be in peculiar opposition to my own; for, after all, I say with Almanzor—

Know that I alone am king of me.

The reader has now my who and my whereabout, the purpose of the work, and the circumstances under which it is undertaken. He has also a specimen of the author's talents, and may judge for himself, and proceed or send back the volume to the bookseller, as his own taste shall determine.

CHAPTER VI

MR. CROFTANGRY'S ACCOUNT OF MRS. BETHUNE BALIOL

The moon, were she earthly, no nobler.
Coriolanus.

WHEN we set out on the jolly voyage of life, what a brave fleet there is around us, as, stretching our fresh canvas to the breeze, all "shipshape and Bristol fashion," pennons flying, music playing, cheering each other as we pass, we are rather amused than alarmed when some awkward comrade goes right ashore for want of pilotage! Alas! when the voyage is well spent, and we look about us, toil-worn mariners, how few of our ancient consorts still remain in sight, and they, how torn and wasted, and, like ourselves, struggling to keep as long as possible off the fatal shore against which we are all finally drifting!

I felt this very trite but melancholy truth in all its force the other day, when a packet with a black seal arrived, containing a letter addressed to me by my late excellent friend Mrs. Martha Bethune Baliol, and marked with the fatal indorsation, "To be delivered according to address, after I shall be no more." A letter from her executors accompanied the packet, mentioning that they had found in her will a bequest to me of a painting of some value, which she stated would just fit the space above my cupboard, and fifty guineas to buy a ring. And thus I separated, with all the kindness which we had maintained for many years, from a friend who, though old enough to have been the companion of my mother, was yet, in gaiety of spirits and admirable sweetness of temper, capable of being agreeable, and even animating, society for those who write themselves in the vaward of youth—an advantage which I have lost for these five-and-thirty years. The contents of the packet I had no difficulty in guessing, and have partly hinted at them in the last chapter. But to instruct the reader in the particulars, and at the same time to indulge myself with recalling the virtues and agreeable qualities of my late friend, I will give a short sketch of her manners and habits.

Mrs. Martha Bethune Baliol was a person of quality and fortune, as these are esteemed in Scotland. Her family was ancient, and her connections honorable. She was not fond of specially indicating her exact age, but her juvenile recollections stretched backwards till before the eventful year 1745; and she remembered the Highland clans being in possession of the Scottish capital, though probably only as an indistinct vision. Her fortune, independent by her father's bequest, was rendered opulent by the death of more than one brave brother, who fell successively in the service of their country; so that the family estates became vested in the only surviving child of the ancient house of Bethune Baliol. My intimacy was formed with the excellent lady after this event, and when she was already something advanced in age.

She inhabited, when in Edinburgh, where she regularly spent the winter season, one of those old hotels, which, till of late, were to be found in the neighborhood of the Canongate and of the palace of Holyrood House, and which, separated from the street, now dirty and vulgar, by paved courts and gardens of some extent, made amends for an indifferent access, by showing something of aristocratic state and seclusion, when you were once admitted within their precincts. They have pulled her house down; for, indeed, betwixt building and burning, every ancient monument of the Scottish capital is now likely to be utterly demolished. I pause on the recollections of the place, however; and since nature has denied a pencil when she placed a pen in my hand, I will endeavor to make words answer the purpose of delineation.

Baliol's Lodging, so was the mansion named, reared its high stack of chimneys, among which were seen a turret or two, and one of those small projecting platforms called bartizans, above the mean and modern buildings which line the south side of the Canongate, towards the lower end of that street, and not distant from the palace. A *porte cochère*, having a wicket for foot-passengers, was, upon due occasion, unfolded by a lame old man, tall, grave, and thin, who tenanted a hovel beside the gate, and acted as porter. To this office he had been promoted by my friend's charitable feelings for an old soldier, and partly by an idea that his head, which was a very fine one, bore some resemblance to that of Garrick in the character of Lusignan. He was a man saturnine, silent, and slow in his proceedings, and would never open the *porte cochère* to a hackney coach indicating the wicket with his finger, as the proper passage

for all who came in that obscure vehicle, which was not permitted to degrade with its ticketed presence the dignity of Baliol's Lodging. I do not think this peculiarity would have met with his lady's approbation, any more than the occasional partiality of Lusignan, or, as mortals called him, Archy Macready, to a dram. But Mrs. Martha Bethune Baliol, conscious that, in case of conviction, she could never have prevailed upon herself to dethrone the King of Palestine from the stone bench on which he sat for hours, knitting his stocking, refused, by accrediting the intelligence, even to put him upon his trial ; well judging that he would observe more wholesome caution if he conceived his character unsuspected than if he were detected, and suffered to pass unpunished. For, after all, she said, it would be cruel to dismiss an old Highland soldier for a peccadillo so appropriate to his country and profession.

The stately gate for carriages, or the humble accommodation for foot-passengers, admitted into a narrow and short passage, running between two rows of lime-trees, whose green foliage during the spring contrasted strangely with the swart complexion of the two walls by the side of which they grew. This access led to the front of the house, which was formed by two gable ends, notched, and having their windows adorned with heavy architectural ornaments ; they joined each other at right angles, and a half-circular tower, which contained the entrance and the staircase, occupied the point of junction and rounded the acute angle. One of other two sides of the little court, in which there was just sufficient room to turn a carriage, was occupied by some low buildings answering the purpose of offices ; the other, by a parapet surrounded by a highly-ornamented iron railing, twined round with honeysuckle and other parasitical shrubs, which permitted the eye to peep into a pretty suburban garden, extending down to the road called the South Back of the Canongate, and boasting a number of old trees, many flowers, and even some fruit. We must not forget to state, that the extreme cleanliness of the courtyard was such as intimated that mop and pail had done their utmost in that favored spot to atone for the general dirt and dinginess of the quarter where the premises were situated.

Over the doorway were the arms of Bethune and Baliol, with various other devices carved in stone ; the door itself was studded with iron nails, and formed of black oak ; an iron rasp,* as it was called, was placed on it, instead of a knocker,

* See Note 19.

for the purpose of summoning the attendants. He who usually appeared at the summons was a smart lad, in a handsome livery, the son of Mrs. Martha's gardener at Mount Baliol. Now and then a servant-girl, nicely but plainly dressed, and fully accoutered with stockings and shoes, would perform this duty; and twice or thrice I remember being admitted by Beauffet himself, whose exterior looked as much like that of a clergyman of rank as the butler of a gentleman's family. He had been *valet-de-chambre* to the last Sir Richard Bethune Baliol, and was a person highly trusted by the present lady. A full stand, as it is called in Scotland, of garments of a dark color, gold buckles in his shoes and at the knees of his breeches, with his hair regularly dressed and powdered, announced him to be a domestic of trust and importance. His mistress used to say of him,

> He's sad and civil,
> And suits well for a servant with my fortunes.

As no one can escape scandal, some said that Beauffet made a rather better thing of the place than the modesty of his old-fashioned wages would, unassisted, have amounted to. But the man was always very civil to me. He had been long in the family, had enjoyed legacies, and laid by a something of his own, upon which he now enjoys ease with dignity, in as far as his newly-married wife, Tibbie Shortacres, will permit him.

The Lodging—dearest readers, if you are tired, pray pass over the next four or five pages—was not by any means so large as its external appearance led people to conjecture. The interior accommodation was much cut up by cross walls and long passages, and that neglect of economizing space which characterizes old Scottish architecture. But there was far more room than my old friend required, even when she had, as was often the case, four or five young cousins under her protection: and I believe much of the house was unoccupied. Mrs. Bethune Baliol never, in my presence, showed herself so much offended, as once with a meddling person who advised her to have the windows of these supernumerary apartments built up, to save the tax. She said in ire that, while she lived, the light of God should visit the house of her fathers; and while she had a penny, the king and country should have their due. Indeed, she was punctiliously loyal, even in that most staggering test of loyalty, the payment of imposts. Mr. Beauffet told me he was ordered to offer a glass of wine to the person who collected the in-

come-tax, and that the poor man was so overcome by a reception so unwontedly generous, that he had wellnigh fainted on the spot.

You entered by a matted ante-room into the eating-parlor, filled with old-fashioned furniture, and hung with family portraits, which, excepting one of Sir Bernard Bethune, in James the Sixth's time, said to be by Jameson, were exceedingly frightful. A saloon, as it was called, a long narrow chamber, led out of the dining-parlor, and served for a drawing-room. It was a pleasant apartment, looking out upon the south flank of Holyrood House, the gigantic slope of Arthur's Seat, and the girdle of lofty rocks called Salisbury Crags*—objects so rudely wild, that the mind can hardly conceive them to exist in the vicinage of a populous metropolis. The paintings of the saloon came from abroad, and had some of them much merit. To see the best of them, however, you must be admitted into the very penetralia of the temple, and allowed to draw the tapestry at the upper end of the saloon, and enter Mrs. Martha's own special dressing-room. This was a charming apartment, of which it would be difficult to describe the form, it had so many recesses which were filled up with shelves of ebony, and cabinets of japan and ormolu ; some for holding books, of which Mrs. Martha had an admirable collection, some for a display of ornamental china, others for shells and similar curiosities In a little niche, half screened by a curtain of crimson silk, was disposed a suit of tilting armor of bright steel, inlaid with silver, which had been worn on some memorable occasion by Sir Bernard Bethune, already mentioned ; while over the canopy of the niche hung the broadsword with which her father had attempted to change the fortunes of Britain in 1715, and the spontoon which her elder brother bore when he was leading on a company of the Black Watch † at Fontenoy.

There were some Italian and Flemish pictures of admitted authenticity, a few genuine bronzes and other objects of curiosity, which her brothers or herself had picked up while abroad. In short, it was a place where the idle were tempted to become studious, the studious to grow idle, where the grave might find matter to make them gay, and the gay subjects for gravity.

That it might maintain some title to its name, I must not forget to say, that the lady's dressing-room exhibited a superb

* See Note 20 † See Note 21.

mirror, framed in silver filigree work; a beautiful toilet, the cover of which was of Flanders lace; and a set of boxes corresponding in materials and work to the frame of the mirror.

This dressing apparatus, however, was mere matter of parade: Mrs. Martha Bethune Baliol always went through the actual duties of the toilet in an inner apartment, which corresponded with her sleeping-room by a small detached staircase. There were, I believe, more than one of those "turnpike stairs," as they were called, about the house, by which the public rooms, all of which entered through each other, were accommodated with separate and independent modes of access. In the little boudoir we have described, Mrs. Martha Baliol had her choicest meetings. She kept early hours; and if you went in the morning, you must not reckon that space of day as extending beyond three o'clock, or four at the utmost. These vigilant habits were attended with some restraint on her visitors, but they were indemnified by your always finding the best society, and the best information, which was to be had for the day in the Scottish capital. Without at all affecting the blue stocking, she liked books; they amused her, and if the authors were persons of character, she thought she owed them a debt of civility, which she loved to discharge by personal kindness. When she gave a dinner to a small party, which she did now and then, she had the good nature to look for, and the good luck to discover, what sort of people suited each other best, and chose her company as Duke Theseus did his hounds.

> Matched in mouth like bells,
> Each under each,*

so that every guest could take his part in the cry; instead of one mighty Tom of a fellow, like Dr. Johnson, silencing all besides by the tremendous depth of his diapason. On such occasions she afforded *chère exquise;* and every now and then there was some dish of French, or even Scottish derivation, which, as well as the numerous assortment of *vins extraordinaires* produced by Mr. Beauffet, gave a sort of antique and foreign air to the entertainment, which rendered it more interesting.

It was a great thing to be asked to such parties, and not less so to be invited to the early *conversazione,* which, in spite of fashion, by dint of the best coffee, the finest tea, and *chasse-*

*Shakspeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream,* Act iv. sc. 1.

café that would have called the dead to life, she contrived now and then to assemble in her saloon already mentioned, at the unnatural hour of eight in the evening. At such times, the cheerful old lady seemed to enjoy herself so much in the happiness of her guests, that they exerted themselves in turn to prolong her amusement and their own; and a certain charm was excited around, seldom to be met with in parties of pleasure, and which was founded on the general desire of every one present to contribute something to the common amusement.

But although it was a great privilege to be admitted to wait on my excellent friend in the morning, or be invited to her dinner or evening parties, I prized still higher the right which I had acquired, by old acquaintance, of visiting Baliol's Lodging, upon the chance of finding its venerable inhabitant preparing for tea, just about six o'clock in the evening. It was only to two or three old friends that she permitted this freedom, nor was this sort of chance-party ever allowed to extend itself beyond five in number. The answer to those who came later announced that the company was filled up for the evening; which had the double effect of making those who waited on Mrs. Bethune Baliol in this unceremonious manner punctual in observing her hour, and of adding the zest of a little difficulty to the enjoyment of the party.

It more frequently happened that only one or two persons partook of this refreshment on the same evening; or, supposing the case of a single gentleman, Mrs. Martha, though she did not hesitate to admit him to her boudoir, after the privilege of the French and the old Scottish school, took care, as she used to say, to preserve all possible propriety, by commanding the attendance of her principal female attendant, Mrs. Alice Lambskin, who might, from the gravity and dignity of her appearance, have sufficed to matronize a whole boarding-school, instead of one maiden lady of eighty and upwards. As the weather permitted, Mrs. Alice sat duly remote from the company in a fauteuil behind the projecting chimney-piece, or in the embrasure of a window, and prosecuted in Carthusian silence, with indefatigable zeal, a piece of embroidery, which seemed no bad emblem of eternity.

But I have neglected all this while to introduce my friend herself to the reader, at least so far as words can convey the peculiarities by which her appearance and conversation were distinguished.

A little woman, with ordinary features, and an ordinary form, and hair which in youth had no decided color, we may believe Mrs. Martha, when she said of herself that she was never remarkable for personal charms—a modest admission, which was readily confirmed by certain old ladies, her contemporaries, who, whatever might have been the youthful advantages which they more than hinted had been formerly their own share, were now, in personal appearance, as well as in everything else, far inferior to my accomplished friend. Mrs. Martha's features had been of a kind which might be said to wear well; their irregularity was now of little consequence, animated as they were by the vivacity of her conversation; her teeth were excellent; and her eyes, although inclining to gray, were lively, laughing, and undimmed by time. A slight shade of complexion, more brilliant than her years promised, subjected my friend amongst strangers to the suspicion of having stretched her foreign habits as far as the prudent touch of the rouge. But it was a calumny; for, when telling or listening to an interesting and affecting story, I have seen her color come and go as if it played on the cheek of eighteen.

Her hair, whatever its former deficiencies, was now the most beautiful white that time could bleach, and was disposed with some degree of pretension, though in the simplest manner possible, so as to appear neatly smoothed under a cap of Flanders lace, of an old-fashioned, but, as I thought, of a very handsome form, which undoubtedly has a name, and I would endeavor to recur to it, if I thought it would make my description a bit more intelligible. I think I have heard her say these favorite caps had been her mother's, and had come in fashion with a peculiar kind of wig used by the gentlemen about the time of the battle of Ramillies. The rest of her dress was always rather costly and distinguished, especially in the evening. A silk or satin gown of some color becoming her age, and of a form which, though complying to a certain degree with the present fashion, had always a reference to some more distant period, was garnished with triple ruffles; her shoes had diamond buckles, and were raised a little at heel, an advantage which, possessed in her youth, she alleged her size would not permit her to forego in her old age. She always wore rings, bracelets, and other ornaments of value, either for the materials or the workmanship; nay, perhaps she was a little profuse in this species of display. But she wore them as subordinate matters, to which the habits of being constantly in high life

rendered her indifferent: she wore them because her rank required it, and thought no more of them as articles of finery than a gentleman dressed for dinner thinks of his clean linen and well-brushed coat, the consciousness of which embarrasses the rustic beau on a Sunday.

Now and then, however, if a gem or ornament chanced to be noticed for its beauty or singularity, the observation usually led the way to an entertaining account of the manner in which it had been acquired, or the person from whom it had descended to its present possessor. On such and similar occasions my old friend spoke willingly, which is not uncommon, but she also, which is more rare, spoke remarkably well, and had in her little narratives concerning foreign parts, or former days, which formed an interesting part of her conversation, the singular art of dismissing all the usual protracted tautology respecting time, place, and circumstances, which is apt to settle like a mist upon the cold and languid tales of age, and at the same time of bringing forward, dwelling upon, and illustrating those incidents and characters which give point and interest to the story.

She had, as we have hinted, traveled a good deal in foreign countries; for a brother, to whom she was much attached, had been sent upon various missions of national importance to the continent, and she had more than once embraced the opportunity of accompanying him. This furnished a great addition to the information which she could supply, especially during the last war, when the continent was for so many years hermetically sealed against the English nation. But, besides, Mrs. Bethune Baliol visited distant countries, not in the modern fashion, when English travel in caravans together, and see in France and Italy little besides the same society which they might have enjoyed at home. On the contrary, she mingled when abroad with the natives of those countries she visited, and enjoyed at once the advantage of their society and the pleasure of comparing it with that of Britain.

In the course of her becoming habituated with foreign manners, Mrs. Bethune Baliol had, perhaps, acquired some slight tincture of them herself. Yet I was always persuaded that the peculiar vivacity of look and manner, the pointed and appropriate action with which she accompanied what she said, the use of the gold and gemmed *tabatière*, or rather I should say *bonbonnière* (for she took no snuff, and the little box contained only a few pieces of candied angelica, or some such ladylike sweetmeat), were of real old-fashioned

Scottish growth, and such as might have graced the tea-table of Susannah Countess of Eglinton,* the patroness of Allan Ramsay, or of the Hon. Mrs. Colonel Ogilvy, who was another mirror by whom the maidens of Auld Reekie were required to dress themselves. Although well acquainted with the customs of other countries, her manners had been chiefly formed in her own, at a time when great folk lived within little space, and when the distinguished names of the highest society gave to Edinburgh the *éclat* which we now endeavor to derive from the unbounded expense and extended circle of our pleasures.

I was more confirmed in this opinion by the peculiarity of the dialect which Mrs. Baliol used. It was Scottish—decidedly Scottish, often containing phrases and words little used in the present day. But then her tone and mode of pronunciation were as different from the usual accent of the ordinary Scotch *patois* as the accent of St. James's is from that of Billingsgate. The vowels were not pronounced much broader than in the Italian language, and there was none of the disagreeable drawl which is so offensive to southern ears. In short, it seemed to be the Scottish as spoken by the ancient court of Scotland, to which no idea of vulgarity could be attached ; and the lively manner and gestures with which it was accompanied were so completely in accord with the sound of the voice and the style of talking that I cannot assign them a different origin. In long derivation, perhaps the manner of the Scottish court might have been originally formed on that of France, to which it had certainly some affinity ; but I will live and die in the belief that those of Mrs. Baliol, as pleasing as they were peculiar, came to her by direct descent from the high dames who anciently adorned with their presence the royal halls of Holyrood.

*See Note 22.

CHAPTER VII

MRS. BALIOL ASSISTS MR. CROFTANGRY IN HIS LITERARY SPECULATIONS

SUCH as I have described Mrs. Bethune Baliol, the reader will easily believe that, when I thought of the miscellaneous nature of my work, I rested upon the information she possessed, and her communicative disposition, as one of the principal supports of my enterprise. Indeed, she by no means disapproved of my proposed publication, though expressing herself very doubtful how far she could personally assist it—a doubt which might be perhaps set down to a little ladylike coquetry, which required to be sued for the boon she was not unwilling to grant. Or, perhaps, the good old lady, conscious that her unusual term of years must soon draw to a close, preferred bequeathing the materials in the shape of a legacy to subjecting them to the judgment of a critical public during her lifetime.

Many a time I used, in our conversations of the Canongate, to resume my request of assistance, from a sense that my friend was the most valuable depository of Scottish traditions that was probably now to be found. This was a subject on which my mind was so much made up, that when I heard her carry her description of manners so far back beyond her own time, and describe how Fletcher of Salton spoke, how Graham of Claverhouse danced, what were the jewels worn by the famous Duchess of Lauderdale, and how she came by them, I could not help telling her I thought her some fairy, who cheated us by retaining the appearance of a mortal of our own day, when, in fact, she had witnessed the revolutions of centuries. She was much diverted when I required her to take some solemn oath that she had not danced at the balls given by Mary of Este, when her unhappy husband * occupied Holyrood in a species of honorable banishment ; or asked whether she could not recollect Charles the Second, when he came to Scotland in 1650, and did not

* The Duke of York, afterwards James II., frequently resided in Holyrood House, when his religion rendered him an object of suspicion to the English Parliament.

possess some slight recollections of the bold usurper who drove him beyond the Forth.

"*Beau cousin,*" she said, laughing, "none of these do I remember personally; but you must know there has been wonderfully little change on my natural temper from youth to age. From which it follows, cousin, that, being even now something too young in spirit for the years which Time has marked me in his calendar, I was, when a girl, a little too old for those of my own standing, and as much inclined at that period to keep the society of elder persons as I am now disposed to admit the company of gay young fellows of fifty or sixty like yourself, rather than collect about me all the octogenarians. Now, although I do not actually come from elfland, and therefore cannot boast any personal knowledge of the great personages you inquire about, yet I have seen and heard those who knew them well, and who have given me as distinct an account of them as I could give you myself of the Empress-Queen or Frederick of Prussia; and I will frankly add," said she, laughing and offering her *bonbonnière,* "that *I have* heard so much of the years which immediately succeeded the Revolution, that I sometimes am apt to confuse the vivid descriptions fixed on my memory by the frequent and animated recitation of others for things which I myself have actually witnessed. I caught myself but yesterday describing to Lord M—— the riding of the last Scottish Parliament, with as much minuteness as if I had seen it, as my mother did, from the balcony in front of Lord Moray's lodging in the Canongate."

"I am sure you must have given Lord M—— a high treat."

"I treated him to a hearty laugh, I believe," she replied; "but it is you, you vile seducer of youth, who lead me into such follies. But I will be on my guard against my own weakness. I do not well know if the Wandering Jew is supposed to have a wife, but I should be sorry a decent middle-aged Scottish gentlewoman should be suspected of identity with such a supernatural person."

"For all that, I must torture you a little more, *ma belle cousine,* with my interrogatories; for how shall I ever turn author unless on the strength of the information which you have so often procured me on the ancient state of manners?"

"Stay, I cannot allow you to give your points of inquiry a name so very venerable, if I am expected to answer them. Ancient is a term for antediluvians. You may catechize me about the battle of Flodden, or ask particulars about Bruce and Wallace, under pretext of curiosity after ancient man-

ners; and that last subject would wake my Baliol blood, you know."

"Well, but, Mrs. Baliol, suppose we settle our era. You do not call the accession of James the Sixth to the kingdom of Britain very ancient?"

"Umph! no, cousin. I think I could tell you more of that than folk nowadays remember; for instance, that, as James was trooping towards England, bag and baggage, his journey was stopped near Cockenzie by meeting the funeral of the Earl of Winton,* the old and faithful servant and follower of his ill-fated mother, poor Mary. It was an ill omen for the 'infare,' and so was seen of it, cousin."

I did not choose to prosecute this subject, well knowing Mrs. Bethune Baliol did not like to be much pressed on the subject of the Stuarts, whose misfortunes she pitied, the rather that her father had espoused their cause. And yet her attachment to the present dynasty being very sincere, and even ardent, more especially as her family had served his late Majesty both in peace and war, she experienced a little embarrassment in reconciling her opinions respecting the exiled family with those she entertained for the present. In fact, like many an old Jacobite, she was contented to be somewhat inconsistent on the subject, comforting herself that *now* everything stood as it ought to do, and that there was no use in looking back narrowly on the right or wrong of the matter half a century ago.

"The Highlands," I suggested, "should furnish you with ample subjects of recollection. You have witnessed the complete change of that primeval country, and have seen a race not far removed from the earliest period of society melted down into the great mass of civilization; and that could not happen without incidents striking in themselves, and curious as chapters in the history of the human race."

"It is very true," said Mrs. Baliol; "one would think it should have struck the observers greatly, and yet it scarcely did so. For me, I was no Highlander myself, and the Highland chiefs of old, of whom I certainly knew several, had little in their manners to distinguish them from the lowland gentry when they mixed in society in Edinburgh, and assumed the lowland dress. Their peculiar character was for the clansmen at home; and you must not imagine that they swaggered about in plaids and broadswords at the Cross, or came to the Assembly Rooms in bonnets and kilts."

* See Note 23.

"I remember," said I, that Swift, in his *Journal*, tells Stella he had dined in the house of a Scots nobleman, with two Highland chiefs, whom he had found as well-bred men as he had ever met with." *

"Very likely," said my friend. "The extremes of society approach much more closely to each other than perhaps the Dean of St. Patrick's expected. The savage is always to a certain degree polite. Besides, going always armed, and having a very punctilious idea of their own gentility and consequence, they usually behaved to each other and to the Lowlanders with a good deal of formal politeness, which sometimes even procured them the character of insincerity."

"Falsehood belongs to an early period of society, as well as the deferential forms which we style politeness," I replied. "A child does not see the least moral beauty in truth until he has been flogged half a dozen times. It is so easy, and apparently so natural, to deny what you cannot be easily convicted of, that a savage as well as a child lies to excuse himself, almost as instinctively as he raises his hand to protect his head. The old saying, "confess and be hanged," carries much argument in it. I observed a remark the other day in old Birrell. He mentions that M'Gregor of Glenstrae † and some of his people had surrendered themselves to one of the Earls of Argyle, upon the express condition that they should be conveyed safe into England. The MacCallan Mhor of the day kept the word of promise, but it was only to the ear. He indeed sent his captives to Berwick, where they had an airing on the other side of the Tweed, but it was under the custody of a strong guard, by whom they were brought back to Edinburgh and delivered to the executioner. This Birrell calls "keeping a Highlandman's promise."

"Well," replied Mrs. Baliol, "I might add, that many of the Highland chiefs whom I knew in former days had been brought up in France, which might improve their politeness, though perhaps it did not amend their sincerity. But, considering that, belonging to the depressed and defeated faction in the state, they were compelled sometimes to use dissimulation, you must set their uniform fidelity to their friends against their occasional falsehood to their enemies,

* EXTRACT OF JOURNAL TO STELLA.—"I dined to-day (12th March 1712) with Lord Treasurer and two gentlemen of the Highlands of Scotland, yet very polite men."—Swift's *Works*, vol. iii. p. 7, Edin. 1824

† See Note 24.

and then you will not judge poor John Highlandman too severely. They were in a state of society where bright lights are strongly contrasted with deep shadows."

"It is to that point I would bring you, *ma belle cousine*, and therefore they are most proper subjects for composition."

"And you want to turn composer, my good friend, and set my old tales to some popular tune? But there have been too many composers, if that be the word, in the field before. The Highlands *were* indeed a rich mine; but they have, I think, been fairly wrought out, as a good tune is grinded into vulgarity when it descends to the hurdy-gurdy and the barrel-organ."

"If it be really tune," I replied, "it will recover its better qualities when it gets into the hands of better artists."

"Umph!" said Mrs. Baliol, tapping her box, "we are happy in our own good opinion this evening, Mr. Croftangry. And so you think you can restore the gloss to the tartan, which it has lost by being dragged through so many fingers?"

"With your assistance to procure materials, my dear lady, much, I think, may be done."

"Well, I must do my best, I suppose; though all I know about the Gael is but of little consequence. Indeed, I gathered if chiefly from Donald MacLeish."

"And who might Donald MacLeish be?"

"Neither bard nor seannachie, I assure you, nor monk nor hermit, the approved authorities for old traditions. Donald was as good a postilion as ever drove a chaise and pair between Glencroe and Inverary. I assure you, when I give you my Highland anecdotes, you will hear much of Donald MacLeish. He was Alice Lambskin's beau and mine through a long Highland tour."

"But when am I to possess these anecdotes? You answer me as Harley did poor Prior—

> Let that be done which Mat doth say.
> "Yea," quoth the earl, "but not to-day."

"Well, *mon beau cousin*, if you begin to remind me of my cruelty, I must remind you it has struck nine on the Abbey clock, and it is time you were going home to Little Croftangry. For my promise to assist your antiquarian researches, be assured I will one day keep it to the utmost extent. It shall not be a Highlandman's promise, as your old citizen calls it."

I by this time suspected the purpose of my friend's procrastination ; and it saddened my heart to reflect that I was not to get the information which I desired, excepting in the shape of a legacy. I found, accordingly, in the packet transmitted to me after the excellent lady's death, several anecdotes respecting the Highlands, from which I have selected that which follows, chiefly on account of its possessing great power over the feelings of my critical housekeeper, Janet M'Evoy, who wept most bitterly when I read it to her. It is, however, but a very simple tale, and may have no interest for persons beyond Janet's rank of life or understanding.

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THE HIGHLAND WIDOW

THE HIGHLAND WIDOW

CHAPTER I

It wound as near as near could be,
But what it is she cannot tell;
On the other side it seemed to be
Of the huge broad-breasted old oak-tree.

COLERIDGE.

MRS. BETHUNE BALIOL'S memorandum begins thus :—

It is five-and-thirty, or perhaps nearer forty, years ago, since, to relieve the dejection of spirits occasioned by a great family loss sustained two or three months before, I undertook what was called the short Highland tour. This had become in some degree fashionable; but though the military roads were excellent, yet the accommodation was so indifferent, that it was reckoned a little adventure to accomplish it. Besides, the Highlands, though now as peaceable as any part of King George's dominions, was a sound which still carried terror, while so many survived who had witnessed the insurrection of 1745; and a vague idea of fear was impressed on many, as they looked from the towers of Stirling northward to the huge chain of mountains, which rises like a dusky rampart to conceal in its recesses a people whose dress, manners, and language differed still very much from those of their Lowland countrymen. For my part, I come of a race not greatly subject to apprehensions arising from imagination only. I had some Highland relatives, knew several of their families of distinction; and, though only having the company of my bower-maiden, Mrs. Alice Lambskin, I went on my journey fearless.

But then I had a guide and cicerone almost equal to Great-heart in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, in no less a person than Donald MacLeish, the postilion whom I hired at Stirling, with a pair of able-bodied horses, as steady as Donald himself, to drag my carriage, my duenna, and myself, wheresoever it was my pleasure to go.

Donald MacLeish was one of a race of post-boys whom, I suppose, mail-coaches and steam-boats have put out of fashion. They were to be found chiefly at Perth, Stirling, or Glasgow, where they and their horses were usually hired by travelers, or tourists, to accomplish such journeys of business or pleasure as they might have to perform in the land of the Gael. This class of persons approached to the character of what is called abroad a *conducteur;* or might be compared to the sailing-master on board a British ship of war, who follows out after his own manner the course which the captain commands him to observe. You explained to your postilion the length of your tour, and the objects you were desirous it should embrace; and you found him perfectly competent to fix the places of rest or refreshment, with due attention that those should be chosen with reference to your convenience, and to any points of interest which you might desire to visit.

The qualifications of such a person were necessarily much superior to those of the "first ready," who gallops thrice a day over the same ten miles. Donald MacLeish, besides being quite alert at repairing all ordinary accidents to his horses and carriage, and in making shift to support them, where forage was scarce, with such substitutes as bannocks and cakes, was likewise a man of intellectual resources. He had acquired a general knowledge of the traditional stories of the country which he had traversed so often; and, if encouraged (for Donald was a man of the most decorous reserve), he would willingly point out to you the site of the principal clan-battles, and recount the most remarkable legends by which the road, and the objects which occurred in traveling it, had been distinguished. There was some originality in the man's habits of thinking and expressing himself, his turn for legendary lore strangely contrasting with a portion of the knowing shrewdness belonging to his actual occupation, which made his conversation amuse the way well enough.

Add to this, Donald knew all his peculiar duties in the country which he traversed so frequently. He could tell, to a day, when they would be "killing lamb" at Tyndrum or Glenuilt, so that the stranger would have some chance of being fed like a Christian; and knew to a mile the last village where it was possible to procure a wheaten loaf, for the guidance of those who were little familiar with the Land of Cakes. He was acquainted with the road every mile, and could tell to an inch which side of a Highland

bridge was passable, which decidedly dangerous.* In short, Donald MacLeish was not only our faithful attendant and steady servant, but our humble and obliging friend; and though I have known the half-classical cicerone of Italy, the talkative French *valet-de-place*, and even the muleteer of Spain, who piques himself on being a maize-eater, and whose honor is not to be questioned without danger, I do not think I have ever had so sensible and intelligent a guide.

Our motions were, of course, under Donald's direction; and it frequently happened, when the weather was serene, that we preferred halting to rest his horses even where there was no established stage, and taking our refreshment under a crag, from which leaped a waterfall, or beside the verge of a fountain, enamelled with verdant turf and wild-flowers. Donald had an eye for such spots, and though he had, I daresay, never read *Gil Blas* or *Don Quixote*, yet he chose such halting-places as Le Sage or Cervantes would have described. Very often, as he observed the pleasure I took in conversing with the country people, he would manage to fix our place of rest near a cottage where there was some old Gael whose broadsword had blazed at Falkirk or Preston, and who seemed the frail yet faithful record of times which had passed away. Or he would contrive to quarter us, as far as a cup of tea went, upon the hospitality of some parish minister of worth and intelligence, or some country family of the better class, who mingled with the wild simplicity of their original manners, and their ready and hospitable welcome, a sort of courtesy belonging to a people the lowest of whom are accustomed to consider themselves as being, according to the Spanish phrase, "as good gentlemen as the king, only not quite so rich."

To all such persons Donald MacLeish was well known, and his introduction passed as current as if we had brought letters from some high chief of the country.

Sometimes it happened that the Highland hospitality, which welcomed us with all the variety of mountain fare, preparations of milk and eggs, and girdle-cakes of various kinds, as well as more substantial dainties, according to the inhabitant's means of regaling the passenger, descended rather too exuberantly on Donald MacLeish in the shape of mountain dew. Poor Donald! he was on such occasions like Gideon's fleece, moist with the noble element, which, of course, fell not on us. But it was his only fault, and

*See Highland Bridges. Note 25.

when pressed to drink *doch-an-dorroch* to my ladyship's good health, it would have been ill taken to have refused the pledge, nor was he willing to do such discourtesy. It was, I repeat, his only fault, nor had we any great right to complain; for if it rendered him a little more talkative, it augmented his ordinary share of punctilious civility, and he only drove slower, and talked longer and more pompously, than when he had not come by a drop of usquebaugh. It was, we remarked, only on such occasions that Donald talked with an air of importance of the family of MacLeish; and we had no title to be scrupulous in censuring a foible the consequences of which were confined within such innocent limits.

We became so much accustomed to Donald's mode of managing us, that we observed with some interest the art which he used to produce a little agreeable surprise, by concealing from us the spot where he proposed our halt to be made, when it was of an unusual and interesting character. This was so much his wont, that, when he made apologies at setting off, for being obliged to stop in some strange, solitary place till the horses should eat the corn which he brought on with them for that purpose, our imagination used to be on the stretch to guess what romantic retreat he had secretly fixed upon for our noontide baiting-place.

We had spent the greater part of the morning at the delightful village of Dalmally, and had gone upon the lake under the guidance of the excellent clergyman who was then incumbent at Glenorquhy,* and had heard an hundred legends of the stern chiefs of Loch Awe,† Duncan with the thrum bonnet, and the other lords of the now moldering towers of Kilchurn. Thus it was later than usual when we set out on our journey, after a hint or two from Donald concerning the length of the way to the next stage, as there was no good halting-place between Dalmally and Oban.

Having bid adieu to our venerable and kind cicerone, we proceeded on our tour, winding round the tremendous mountain called Ben Cruachan, which rushes down in all its majesty of rocks and wilderness on the lake, leaving only a pass, in which, notwithstanding its extreme strength, the warlike clan of MacDougal of Lorn were almost destroyed by the sagacious Robert Bruce. That king, the Wellington of his day, had accomplished by a forced march, the unexpected maneuver of forcing a body of troops round the

* This venerable and hospitable gentleman's name was MacIntyre.
† See Note 26.

other side of the mountain, and thus placed them in the flank and in the rear of the men of Lorn, whom at the same time he attacked in front. The great number of cairns yet visible, as you descend the pass on the westward side, shows the extent of the vengeance which Bruce exhausted on his inveterate and personal enemies. I am, you know, the sister of soldiers, and it has since struck me forcibly that the maneuver which Donald described resembled those of Wellington or of Bonaparte. He was a great man Robert Bruce, even a Baliol must admit that; although it begins now to be allowed that his title to the crown was scarce so good as that of the unfortunate family with whom he contended. But let that pass. The slaughter had been the greater, as the deep and rapid river Awe is disgorged from the lake, just in the rear of the fugitives, and encircles the base of the tremendous mountain; so that the retreat of the unfortunate fliers was intercepted on all sides by the inaccessible character of the country, which had seemed to promise them defense and protection.*

Musing, like the Irish lady in the song, "upon things which are long enough a-gone," † we felt no impatience at the slow, and almost creeping, pace with which our conductor proceeded along General Wade's military road, which never or rarely condescends to turn aside from the steepest ascent, but proceeds right up and down hill, with the indifference to height and hollow, steep or level, indicated by the old Roman engineers. Still, however, the substantial excellence of these great works—for such are the military highways in the Highlands—deserved the compliment of the poet, who, whether he came from our sister kingdom, and spoke in his own dialect, or whether he supposed those whom he addressed might have some national pretension to the second sight, produced the celebrated couplet—

> Had you but seen these roads *before* they were made,
> You would hold up your hands, and bless General Wade.

Nothing indeed can be more wonderful than to see these wildernesses penetrated and pervious in every quarter by broad accesses of the best possible construction, and so superior to what the country could have demanded for many

* See Battle betwixt Bruce and Macdougal of Lorn. Note 27.

† This is a line from a very pathetic ballad which I heard sung by one of the young ladies of Edgeworthstown in 1825. I do not know that it has been printed.

centuries for any pacific purpose of commercial intercourse. Thus the traces of war are sometimes happily accommodated to the purposes of peace. The victories of Bonaparte have been without results; but his road over the Simplon will long be the communication betwixt peaceful countries, who will apply to the ends of commerce and friendly intercourse that gigantic work which was formed for the ambitious purpose of warlike invasion.

While we were thus stealing along, we gradually turned round the shoulder of Ben Cruachan, and descending the course of the foaming and rapid Awe, left behind us the expanse of the majestic lake which gives birth to that impetuous river. The rocks and precipices which stooped down perpendicularly on our path on the right hand exhibited a few remains of the wood which once clothed them, but which had, in latter times, been felled to supply, Donald MacLeish informed us, the iron founderies at the Bunawe. This made us fix our eyes with interest on one large oak, which grew on the left hand towards the river. It seemed a tree of extraordinary magnitude and picturesque beauty, and stood just where there appeared to be a few roods of open ground lying among huge stones, which had rolled down from the mountain. To add to the romance of the situation, the spot of clear ground extended round the foot of a proud-browed rock, from the summit of which leaped a mountain stream in a fall of sixty feet, in which it was dissolved into foam and dew. At the bottom of the fall the rivulet with difficulty collected, like a routed general, its dispersed forces, and, as if tamed by its descent, found a noiseless passage through the heath to join the Awe.

I was much struck with the tree and waterfall, and wished myself nearer them; not that I thought of sketch-book or portfolio—for, in my younger days, misses were not accustomed to black-lead pencils, unless they could use them to some good purpose—but merely to indulge myself with a closer view. Donald immediately opened the chaise door, but observed it was rough walking down the brae, and that I would see the tree better by keeping the road for a hundred yards farther, when it passed closer to the spot, for which he seemed, however, to have no predilection. "He knew," he said, "a far bigger tree than that nearer Bunawe, and it was a place where there was flat ground for the carriage to stand, which it could jimply do on these braes; but just as my leddyship liked."

My ladyship did choose rather to look at the fine tree be-

fore me than to pass it by in hopes of a finer; so we walked beside the carriage till we should come to a point from which, Donald assured us, we might, without scrambling, go as near the tree as we chose, "though he wadna advise us to go nearer than the highroad."

There was something grave and mysterious in Donald's sun-browned countenance when he gave us this intimation, and his manner was so different from his usual frankness, that my female curiosity was set in motion. We walked on the whilst, and I found the tree, of which we had now lost sight by the intervention of some rising ground, was really more distant than I had at first supposed. "I could have sworn now," said I to my cicerone, "that yon tree and waterfall was the very place where you intended to make a stop to-day."

"The Lord forbid!" said Donald, hastily.

"And for what, Donald? why should you be willing to pass so pleasant a spot?"

"It's ower near Dalmally, my leddy, to corn the beasts: it would bring their dinner ower near their breakfast, poor things; an,' besides, the place is not canny."

"Oh! then the mystery is out. There is a bogle or a brownie, a witch or a gyre-carlin, a bodach or a fairy in the case?"

"The ne'er a bit, my leddy: ye are clean aff the road, as I may say. But if your leddyship will just hae patience, and wait till we are by the place and out of the glen, I'll tell ye all about it. There is no much luck in speaking of such things in the place they chanced in."

I was obliged to suspend my curiosity, observing, that if I persisted in twisting the discourse one way while Donald was twining it another, I should make his objection, like a hempen cord, just so much the tougher. At length the promised turn of the road brought us within fifty paces of the tree which I desired to admire, and I now saw to my surprise that there was a human habitation among the cliffs which surrounded it. It was a hut of the least dimensions, and most miserable description, that I ever saw even in the Highlands. The walls of sod, or "divot," as the Scotch call it, were not four feet high; the roof was of turf, repaired with reeds and sedges; the chimney was composed of clay, bound round by straw ropes; and the whole walls, roof, and chimney were alike covered with the vegetation of house-leek, rye-grass, and moss, common to decayed cottages formed of such materials. There was not the slightest

vestige of a kale-yard, the usual accompaniment of the very worst huts; and of living things we saw nothing, save a kid which was browsing on the roof of the hut, and a goat, its mother, at some distance, feeding betwixt the oak and the river Awe.

"What man," I could not help exclaiming, "can have committed sin deep enough to deserve such a miserable dwelling!"

"Sin enough," said Donald MacLeish, with a half-suppressed groan; "and God He knoweth, misery enough too; and it is no man's dwelling neither, but a woman's."

"A woman's!" I repeated, "and in so lonely a place. What sort of a woman can she be?"

"Come this way, my leddy, and you may judge that for yourself," said Donald. And by advancing a few steps, and making a sharp turn to the left, we gained a sight of the side of the great broad-breasted oak, in the direction opposed to that in which we had hitherto seen it.

"If she keeps her old wont, she will be there at this hour of the day," said Donald; but immediately became silent, and pointed with his finger, as one afraid of being overheard. I looked, and beheld, not without some sense of awe, a female form seated by the stem of the oak, with her head drooping, her hands clasped, and a dark-colored mantle drawn over her head, exactly as Judah is represented in the Syrian medals as seated under her palm-tree. I was infected with the fear and reverence which my guide seemed to entertain towards this solitary being, nor did I think of advancing towards her to obtain a nearer view until I had cast an inquiring look on Donald; to which he replied in a half-whisper—"She has been a fearfu' bad woman, my leddy."

"Mad women, said you," replied I, hearing him perfectly; "then she is perhaps dangerous?"

"No, she is not mad," replied Donald; "for then it may be she would be happier than she is; though when she thinks on what she has done, and caused to be done, rather than yield up a hair-breadth of her ain wicked will, it is not likely she can be very well settled. But she neither is mad nor mischievous; and yet, my leddy, I think you had best not go nearer to her." And then, in a few hurried words, he made me acquainted with the story which I am now to tell more in detail. I heard the narrative with a mixture of horror and sympathy, which at once impelled me to approach the sufferer, and speak to her the words of comfort,

or rather of pity, and at the same time made me afraid to do so.

This indeed was the feeling with which she was regarded by the Highlanders in the neighborhood, who looked upon Elspat MacTavish, or the Woman of the Tree, as they called her, as the Greeks considered those who were pursued by the Furies, and endured the mental torment consequent on great criminal actions. They regarded such unhappy beings as Orestes and Œdipus as being less the voluntary perpetrators of their crimes than as the passive instruments by which the terrible decrees of Destiny had been accomplished; and the fear with which they beheld them was not unmingled with veneration.

I also learned farther from Donald MacLeish, that there was some apprehenison of ill luck attending those who had the boldness to approach too near, or disturb the awful solitude of a being so unutterably miserable: that it was supposed that whomsoever approached her must experience in some respect the contagion of her wretchedness.

It was therefore with some reluctance that Donald saw me prepare to obtain a nearer view of the sufferer, and that he himself followed to assist me in the descent down a very rough path. I believe his regard for me conquered some ominous feelings in his own breast, which connected his duty on this occasion with the presaging fear of lame horses, lost linch-pins, overturns, and other perilous chances of the postilion's life.

I am not sure if my own courage would have carried me so close to Elspat, had he not followed. There was in her countenance the stern abstraction of hopeless and overpowering sorrow, mixed with the contending feelings of remorse, and of the pride which struggled to conceal it. She guessed, perhaps, that it was curiosity, arising out of her uncommon story, which induced me to intrude on her solitude; and she could not be pleased that a fate like hers had been the theme of a traveler's amusement. Yet the look with which she regarded me was one of scorn instead of embarrassment. The opinion of the world and all its children could not add or take an iota from her load of misery; and, save from the half-smile that seemed to intimate the contempt of a being rapt by the very intensity of her affliction above the sphere of ordinary humanities, she seemed as indifferent to my gaze as if she had been a dead corpse or a marble statute.

Elspat was above the middle stature; her hair, now

grizzled, was still profuse, and it had been of the most decided black. So were her eyes, in which, contradicting the stern and rigid features of her countenance, there shone the wild and troubled light that indicates an unsettled mind. Her hair was wrapped round a silver bodkin with some attention to neatness, and her dark mantle was disposed around her with a degree of taste, though the materials were of the most ordinary sort.

After gazing on this victim of guilt and calamity till I was ashamed to remain silent, though uncertain how I ought to address her, I began to express my surprise at her choosing such a desert and deplorable dwelling. She cut short these expressions of sympathy, by answering in a stern voice, without the least change of countenance or posture—"Daughter of the stranger, he has told you my story." I was silenced at once, and felt how little all earthly accommodation must seem to the mind which had such subjects as hers for rumination. Without again attempting to open the conversation, I took a piece of gold from my purse, for Donald had intimated she lived on alms, expecting she would at least stretch her hand to receive it. But she neither accepted nor rejected the gift; she did not even seem to notice it, though twenty times as valuable, probably, as was usually offered. I was obliged to place it on her knee, saying involuntarily, as I did so, "May God pardon you, and relieve you!" I shall never forget the look which she cast up to Heaven, nor the tone in which she exclaimed, in the very words of my old friend, John Home—

"My beautiful—my brave!"

It was the language of nature, and arose from the heart of the deprived mother, as it did from that gifted imaginative poet, while furnishing with appropriate expressions the ideal grief of Lady Randolph.

CHAPTER II

O, I'm come to the Low Country,
  Och, och, ohonochie,
Without a penny in my pouch
  To buy a meal for me.
I was the proudest of my clan,
  Long, long may I repine;
And Donald was the bravest man,
  And Donald he was mine.

Old Song.

ELSPAT had enjoyed happy days, though her age had sunk into hopeless and inconsolable sorrow and distress. She was once the beautiful and happy wife of Hamish MacTavish, for whom his strength and feats of prowess had gained the title of MacTavish Mhor. His life was turbulent and dangerous, his habits being of the old Highland stamp, which esteemed it shame to want anything that could be had for the taking. Those in the Lowland line who lay near him, and desired to enjoy their lives and property in quiet, were contented to pay him a small composition, in name of protection-money, and comforted themselves with the old proverb, that it was "better to fleech the deil than fight him." Others, who accounted such composition dishonorable, were often surprised by MacTavish Mhor and his associates and followers, who usually inflicted an adequate penalty, either in person or property, or both. The creagh is yet remembered in which he swept one hundred and fifty cows from Monteith in one drove; and how he placed the laird of Ballybught naked in a slough, for having threatened to send for a party of the Highland Watch to protect his property.

Whatever were occasionally the triumphs of this daring cateran, they were often exchanged for reverses; and his narrow escapes, rapid flights, and the ingenious stratagems with which he extricated himself from imminent danger, were no less remembered and admired than the exploits in which he had been successful. In weal or woe, through every species of fatigue, difficulty and danger, Elspat was his faithful companion. She enjoyed with him the fits of occasional prosperity; and when adversity pressed them

hard, her strength of mind, readiness of wit, and courageous endurance of danger and toil are said often to have stimulated the exertions of her husband.

Their morality was of the old Highland caste, faithful friends and fierce enemies : the Lowland herds and harvests they accounted their own, whenever they had the means of driving off the one or of seizing upon the other ; nor did the least scruple on the right of property interfere on such occasions. Hamish Mhor argued like the old Cretan warrior :

> My sword, my spear, my shaggy shield,
> They make me lord of all below ;
> For he who dreads the lance to wield
> Before my shaggy shield must bow ;
> His lands, his vineyards, must resign,
> And all that cowards have is mine.

But those days of perilous, though frequently successful, depredation began to be abridged after the failure of the expedition of Prince Charles Edward. MacTavish Mhor had not sat still on that occasiou, and he was outlawed, both as a traitor to the state and as a robber and cateran. Garrisons were now settled in many places where a redcoat had never before been seen, and the Saxon war-drum resounded among the most hidden recesses of the Highland mountains. The fate of MacTavish became every day more inevitable ; and it was the more difficult for him to make his exertions for defense or escape, that Elspat, amid his evil days, had increased his family with an infant child, which was a considerable encumbrance upon the necessary rapidity of their motions.

At length the fatal day arrived. In a strong pass on the skirts of Ben Cruachan the celebrated MacTavish Mhor was surprised by a detachment of the "sidier roy." His wife assisted him heroically, charging his piece from time to time ; and as they were in possession of a post that was nearly unassailable, he might have perhaps escaped if his ammunition had lasted. But at length his balls were expended, although it was not until he had fired off most of the silver buttons from his waistcoat, and the soldiers, no longer deterred by fear of the unerring marksman, who had slain three and wounded more of their number, approached his stronghold, and, unable to take him alive, slew him, after a most desperate resistance.

All this Elspat witnessed and survived, for she had, in the child which relied on her for support, a motive for strength and exertion. In what manner she maintained herself it

is not easy to say. Her only ostensible means of support were a flock of three or four goats, which she fed wherever she pleased on the mountain pastures, no one challenging the intrusion. In the general distress of the country, her ancient acquaintances had little to bestow ; but what they could part with from their own necessities they willingly devoted to the relief of others. From Lowlanders she sometimes demanded tribute, rather than requested alms. She had not forgotten she was the widow of MacTavish Mhor, or that the child who trotted by her knee might, such were her imaginations, emulate one day the fame of his father, and command the same influence which he had once exerted without control. She associated so little with others, went so seldom and so unwillingly from the wildest recesses of the mountains, where she usually dwelt with her goats, that she was quite unconscious of the great change which had taken place in the country around her, the substitution of civil order for military violence, and the strength gained by the law and its adherents over those who were called in Gaelic song "the stormy sons of the sword." Her own diminished consequence and straitened circumstances she indeed felt, but for this the death of MacTavish Mhor was, in her apprehension, a sufficing reason ; and she doubted not that she should rise to her former state of importance when Hamish Bean (or Fair-haired James) should be able to wield the arms of his father. If, then, Elspat was repelled rudely when she demanded anything necessary for her wants, or the accommodation of her little flock, by a churlish farmer, her threats of vengeance, obscurely expressed, yet terrible in their tenor, used frequently to extort, through fear of her maledictions, the relief which was denied to her necessities ; and the trembling goodwife who gave meal or money to the widow of MacTavish Mhor wished in her heart that the stern old carline had been burned on the day her husband had his due.

Years thus ran on, and Hamish Bean grew up, not indeed to be of his father's size or strength, but to become an active, high-spirited, fair-haired youth, with a ruddy cheek, an eye like an eagle, and all the agility, if not all the strength, of his formidable father, upon whose history and achievements his mother dwelt, in order to form her son's mind to a similar course of adventures. But the young see the present state of this changeful world more keenly than the old. Much attached to his mother, and disposed to do all in his power for her support, Hamish yet perceived,

when he mixed with the world, that the trade of the cateran was now alike dangerous and discreditable, and that, if he were to emulate his father's prowess, it must be in some other line of warfare, more consonant to the opinions of the present day.

As the faculties of mind and body began to expand, he became more sensible of the precarious nature of his situation, of the erroneous views of his mother, and her ignorance respecting the changes of the society with which she mingled so little. In visiting friends and neighbors, he became aware of the extremely reduced scale to which his parent was limited, and learned that she possessed little or nothing more than the absolute necessaries of life, and that these were sometimes on the point of failing. At times his success in fishing and the chase was able to add something to her subsistence; but he saw no regular means of contributing to her support, unless by stooping to servile labor, which, if he himself could have endured it, would, he knew, have been like a death's-wound to the pride of his mother.

Elspat, meanwhile, saw with surprise that Hamish Bean, although now tall and fit for the field, showed no disposition to enter on his father's scene of action. There was something of the mother at her heart, which prevented her from urging him in plain terms to take the field as a cateran; for the fear occurred of the perils into which the trade must conduct him, and when she would have spoken to him on the subject, it seemed to her heated imagination as if the ghost of her husband arose between them in his bloody tartans, and, laying his finger on his lips, appeared to prohibit the topic. Yet she wondered at what seemed his want of spirit, sighed as she saw him from day to day lounging about in the long-skirted Lowland coat, which the legislature had imposed upon the Gael instead of their own romantic garb, and thought how much nearer he would have resembled her husband had he been clad in the belted plaid and short hose, with his polished arms gleaming at his side.

Besides these subjects for anxiety, Elspat had others arising from the engrossing impetuosity of her temper. Her love of MacTavish Mhor had been qualified by respect, and sometimes even by fear, for the cateran was not the species of man who submits to female government; but over his son she had exerted, at first during childhood, and afterwards in early youth, an imperious authority, which gave her maternal love a character of jealousy. She could not bear when Hamish, with advancing life, made repeated steps

towards independence, absented himself from her cottage at such season, and for such length of time, as he chose, and seemed to consider, although maintaining towards her every possible degree of respect and kindness, that the control and responsibility of his actions rested on himself alone. This would have been of little consequence could she have concealed her feelings within her own bosom; but the ardor and impatience of her passions made her frequently show her son that she conceived herself neglected and ill-used. When he was absent for any length of time from her cottage, without giving intimation of his purpose, her resentment on his return used to be so unreasonable, that it naturally suggested to a young man fond of independence, and desirous to amend his situation in the world, to leave her, even for the very purpose of enabling him to provide for the parent whose egotistical demands on his filial attention tended to confine him to a desert, in which both were starving in hopeless and helpless indigence.

Upon one occasion, the son having been guilty of some independent excursion, by which the mother felt herself affronted and disobliged, she had been more than usually violent on his return, and awakened in Hamish a sense of displeasure, which clouded his brow and cheek. At length, as she persevreed in her unreasonable resentment, his patience became exhausted, and, taking his gun from the chimney-corner, and muttering to himself the reply which his respect for his mother prevented him from speaking aloud, he was about to leave the hut which he had but barely entered.

"Hamish," said his mother, "are you again about to leave me?"

But Hamish only replied by looking at and rubbing the lock of his gun.

"Ay, rub the lock of your gun," said his parent, bitterly; "I am glad you have courage enough to fire it, though it be but at a roe-deer."

Hamish started at this undeserved taunt, and cast a look of anger at her in reply.

She saw that she had found the means of giving him pain. "Yes," she said, "look fierce as you will at an old woman, and your mother; it would be long ere you bent your brow on the angry countenance of a bearded man."

"Be silent, mother, or speak of what you understand," said Hamish, much irritated, "and that is of the distaff and the spindle."

"And was it of spindle and distaff that I was thinking

when I bore you away on my back, through the fire of six of the Saxon soldiers, and you a wailing child? I tell you, Hamish, I know a hundredfold more of swords and guns than ever you will; and you will never learn so much of noble war by yourself as you have seen when you were wrapped up in my plaid."

"You are determined at least to allow me no peace at home, mother; but this shall have an end," said Hamish, as, resuming his purpose of leaving the hut, he rose and went towards the door.

"Stay, I command you," said his mother—"stay! or may the gun you carry be the means of your ruin—may the road you are going be the track of your funeral!"

"What makes you use such words, mother?" said the young man, turning a little back; "they are not good, and good cannot come of them. Farewell just now, we are too angry to speak together—farewell; it will be long ere you see me again." And he departed, his mother, in the first burst of her impatience, showering after him her maledictions, and in the next invoking them on her own head, so that they might spare her son's. She passed that day and the next in all the vehemence of impotent and yet unrestrained passion, now entreating Heaven, and such powers as were familiar to her by rude tradition, to restore her dear son, "the calf of her heart"; now in impatient resentment, meditating with what bitter terms she should rebuke his filial disobedience upon his return; and now studying the most tender language to attach him to the cottage, which, when her boy was present, she would not, in the rapture of her affection, have exchanged for the apartments of Taymouth Castle.

Two days passed, during which, neglecting even the slender means of supporting nature which her situation afforded, nothing but the strength of a frame accustomed to hardships and privations of every kind could have kept her in existence, notwithstanding the anguish of her mind prevented her being sensible of her personal weakness. Her dwelling, at this period, was the same cottage near which I had found her, but then more habitable by the exertions of Hamish, by whom it had been in a great measure built and repaired.

It was on the third day after her son had disappeared, as she sat at the door rocking herself, after the fashion of her countrywomen when in distress or in pain, that the then unwonted circumstance occurred of a passenger being seen on the highroad above the cottage. She cast but one glance

at him; he was on horseback, so that it could not be Hamish, and Elspat cared not enough for any other being on earth to make her turn her eyes towards him a second time.

The stranger, however, paused opposite to her cottage, and dismounting from his pony, led it down the steep and broken path which conducted to her door.

"God bless you, Elspat MacTavish!" She looked at the man, as he addressed her in her native language, with the displeased air of one whose reverie is interrupted; but the traveler went on to say, "I bring you tidings of your son Hamish." At once, from being the most uninteresting object, in respect to Elspat, that could exist, the form of the stranger became awful in her eyes, as that of a messenger descended from Heaven, expressly to pronounce upon her death or life. She started from her seat, and with hands convulsively clasped together, and held up to Heaven, eyes fixed on the stranger's countenance, and person stooping forward to him, she looked those inquiries which her faltering tongue could not articulate. "Your son sends you his dutiful remembrance and this," said the messenger, putting into Elspat's hands a small purse containing four or five dollars.

"He is gone—he is gone!" exclaimed Elspat: "he has sold himself to be the servant of the Saxons, and I shall never more behold him! Tell me, Miles MacPhadraick, for now I know you, is it the price of the son's blood that you have put into the mother's hand?"

"Now God forbid!" answered MacPhadraick, who was a tacksman, and had possession of a considerable tract of ground under his chief, a proprietor who lived about twenty miles off—"God forbid I should do wrong, or say wrong, to you, or to the son of MacTavish Mhor! I swear to you by the hand of my chief that your son is well, and will soon see you; and the rest he will tell you himself." So saying, MacPhadraick hastened back up the pathway, gained the the road, mounted his pony, and rode upon his way.

CHAPTER III

Elspat MacTavish remained gazing on the money, as if the impress of the coin could have conveyed information how it was procured.

"I love not this MacPhadraick," she said to herself; "it was his race of whom the bard hath spoken, saying, 'Fear them not when their words are loud as the winter's wind, but fear them when they fall on you like the sound of the thrush's song.' And yet this riddle can be read but one way: my son hath taken the sword, to win that with strength like a man which churls would keep him from with the words that frighten children.' This idea, when once it occurred to her, seemed the more reasonable, that MacPhadraick, as she well knew, himself a cautious man, had so far encouraged her husband's practises as occasionally to buy cattle of MacTavish, although he must have well known how they were come by, taking care, however, that the transaction was so made as to be accompanied with great profit and absolute safety. Who so likely as MacPhadraick to indicate to a young cateran the glen in which he could commence his perilous trade with most prospect of success, who so likely to convert his booty into money? The feelings which another might have experienced on believing that an only son had rushed forward on the same path in which his father had perished were scarce known to the Highland mothers of that day. She thought of the death of MacTavish Mhor as that of a hero who had fallen in his proper trade of war, and who had not fallen unavenged. She feared less for her son's life than for his dishonor. She dreaded on his account the subjection of strangers, and the death-sleep of the soul which is brought on by what she regarded as slavery.

The moral principle which so naturally and so justly occurs to the mind of those who have been educated under a settled government of laws, that protect the property of the weak against the incursions of the strong, was to poor Elspat a book sealed and a fountain closed. She had been taught to consider those whom they called Saxons as a race with whom the Gael were constantly at war, and she regarded every settlement of theirs within the reach of Highland incursion

as affording a legitimate object of attack and plunder. Her feelings on this point had been strengthened and confirmed, not only by the desire of revenge for the death of her husband, but by the sense of general indignation entertained, not unjustly, through the Highlands of Scotland on account of the barbarous and violent conduct of the victors after the battle of Culloden. Other Highland clans, too, she regarded as the fair objects of plunder when that was possible, upon the score of ancient enmities and deadly feuds.

The prudence that might have weighed the slender means which the times afforded for resisting the efforts of a combined government, which had, in its less compact and established authority, been unable to put down the ravages of such lawless caterans as MacTavish Mhor, was unknown to a solitary woman, whose ideas still dwelt upon her own early times. She imagined that her son had only to proclaim himself his father's successor in adventure and enterprise, and that a force of men as gallant as those who had followed his father's banner would crowd around to support it when again displayed. To her, Hamish was the eagle who had only to soar aloft and resume his native place in the skies, without her being able to comprehend how many additional eyes would have watched his flight, how many additional bullets would have been directed at his bosom. To be brief, Elspat was one who viewed the present state of society with the same feelings with which she regarded the times that had passed away. She had been indigent, neglected, oppressed, since the day that her husband had no longer been feared and powerful, and she thought that the term of her ascendance would return when her son had determined to play the part of his father. If she permitted her eye to glance farther into futurity, it was but to anticipate that she must be for many a day cold in the grave, with the coronach of her tribe cried duly over her, before her fair-haired Hamish could, according to her calculation, die with his hand on the basket-hilt of the red claymore. His father's hair was gray ere, after a hundred dangers, he had fallen with his arms in his hands. That she should have seen and survived the sight was a natural consequence of the manners of that age. And better it was, such was her proud thought, that she had seen him so die than to have witnessed his departure from life in a smoky hovel, on a bed of rotten straw, like an over-worn hound, or a bullock which died of disease. But the hour of her young—her brave Hamish was yet far distant. He must succeed—he must conquer, like

his father. And when he fell at length, for she anticipated for him no bloodless death, Elspat would ere then have lain long in the grave, and could neither see his death-struggle nor mourn over his grave-sod.

With such wild notions working in her brain, the spirit of Elspat rose to its usual pitch, or rather to one which seemed higher. In the emphatic language of Scripture, which in that idiom does not greatly differ from her own, she arose, she washed and changed her apparel, and ate bread, and was refreshed.

She longed eagerly for the return of her son, but she now longed not with the bitter anxiety of doubt and apprehension. She said to herself, that much must be done ere he could in these times arise to be an eminent and dreaded leader. Yet when she saw him again, she almost expected him at the head of a daring band, with pipes playing, and banners flying, the noble tartans fluttering free in the wind, in despite of the laws which had suppressed, under severe penalties, the use of the national garb, and all the appurtenances of Highland chivalry. For all this, her eager imagination was content only to allow the interval of some days.

From the moment this opinion had taken deep and serious possession of her mind, her thoughts were bent upon receiving her son at the head of his adherents in the manner in which she used to adorn her hut for the return of his father.

The substantial means of subsistence she had not the power of providing, nor did she consider that of importance. The successful caterans would bring with them herds and flocks. But the interior of her hut was arranged for their reception ; the usquebaugh was brewed or distilled in a larger quantity than it could have been supposed one lone woman could have made ready. Her hut was put into such order as might, in some degree, give it the appearance of a day of rejoicing. It was swept and decorated with boughs of various kinds, like the house of a Jewess, upon what is termed the Feast of the Tabernacles. The produce of the milk of her little flock was prepared in as great variety of forms as her skill admitted, to entertain her son and his associates whom she expected to receive along with him.

But the principal decoration, which she sought with the greatest toil, was the cloudberry, a scarlet fruit, which is only found on very high hills, and there only in small quantities. Her husband, or perhaps one of his forefathers, had chosen this as the emblem of his family, because it seemed at once

to imply by its scarcity the smallness of their clan, and by the places in which it was found the ambitious height of their pretensions.

For the time that these simple preparations of welcome endured, Elspat was in a state of troubled happiness. In fact, her only anxiety was that she might be able to complete all that she could do to welcome Hamish and the friends who she supposed must have attached themselves to his band before they should arrive, and find her unprovided for their reception.

But when such efforts as she could make had been accomplished, she once more had nothing left to engage her save the trifling care of her goats ; and when these had been attended to, she had only to review her little preparations, renew such as were of a transitory nature, replace decayed branches and fading boughs, and then to sit down at her cottage door and watch the road, as it ascended on the one side from the banks of the Awe, and on the other wound round the heights of the mountain, with such a degree of accommodation to hill and level, as the plan of the military engineer permitted. While so occupied, her imagination, anticipating the future from recollections of the past, formed out of the morning mist or the evening cloud the wild forms of an advancing band, which were then called "sidier dhu" (dark soldiers), dressed in their native tartan, and so named to distinguish them from the scarlet ranks of the British army. In this occupation she spent many hours of each morning and evening.

CHAPTER IV

It was in vain that Elspat's eyes surveyed the distant path, by the earliest light of the dawn, and the latest glimmer of the twilight. No rising dust awakened the expectation of nodding plumes or flashing arms; the solitary traveler trudged listlessly along in his brown Lowland greatcoat, his tartans dyed black or purple, to comply with or to evade the law which prohibited their being worn in their variegated hues. The spirit of the Gael, sunk and broken by the severe though peehaps necessary laws that proscribed the dress and arms which he considered as his birthright, was intimated by his drooping head aud dejected appearance. Not in such depressed wanderers did Elspat recognize the light and free step of her son, now, as she concluded, regenerated from every sign of Saxon thraldom. Night by night, as darkness came, she removed from her unclosed door to throw herself on her restless pallet, not to sleep, but to watch. "The brave and the terrible," she said, "walk by night: their steps are heard in darkness, when all is silent save the whirlwind and the cataract; the timid deer comes only forth when the sun is upon the mountain's peak, but the bold wolf walks in the red light of the harvest moon." She reasoned in vain: her son's expected summons did not call her from the lowly couch whore she lay dreaming of his approach. Hamish came not,

"Hope deferred," saith the royal sage, "maketh the heart sick;" and, strong as was Elspat's constitution, she began to experience that it was unequal to the toils to which her anxious and immoderate affection subjected her, when early one morning the appearance of a traveler on the lonely mountain-road revived hopes which had begun to sink into listless despair. There was no sign of Saxon subjugation about the stranger. At a distance she could see the flutter of the belted plaid, that drooped in graceful folds behind him, and the plume that, placed in the bonnet, showed rank and gentle birth. He carried a gun over his shoulder, the claymore was swinging by his side, with its usual appendages, the dirk, the pistol and the *sporran molloch*. Ere yet her eye had scanned all these particulars, the light step of the

traveler was hastened, his arm was waved in token of recognition; a moment more and Elspat held in her arms her darling son, dressed in the garb of his ancestors, and looking, in her maternal eyes, the fairest among ten thousand!

The first outpouring of affection it would be impossible to describe. Blessings mingled with the most endearing epithets which her energetic language affords, in striving to express the wild rapture of Elspat's joy. Her board was heaped hastily with all she had to offer; and the mother watched the young soldier, as he partook of the refreshment, with feelings how similar to, yet how different from, those with which she had seen him draw his first sustenance from her bosom!

When the tumult of joy was appeased, Elspat became anxious to know her son's adventures since they parted, and could not help greatly censuring his rashness for traversing the hills in the Highland dress in the broad sunshine, when the penalty was so heavy, and so many red soldiers were abroad in the country.

"Fear not for me, mother," said Hamish, in a tone designed to relieve her anxiety, and yet somewhat embarrassed; "I may wear the *breacan* at the gate of Fort-Augustus, if I like it."

"Oh, be not too daring, my beloved Hamish, though it be the fault which best becomes thy father's son—yet be not too daring! Alas! they fight not now as in former days, with fair weapons and on equal terms, but take odds of numbers and of arms, so that the feeble and the strong are alike leveled by the shot of a boy. And do not think me unworthy to be called your father's widow, and your mother, because I speak thus; for God knoweth that, man to man, I would peril thee against the best in Breadalbane and broad Lorn besides."

"I assure you, my dearest mother," replied Hamish, "that I am in no danger. But have you seen MacPhadraick, mother, and what has he said to you on my account?"

"Silver he left me in plenty, Hamish; but the best of his comfort was, that you were well, and would see me soon. But beware of MacPhadraick, my son; for when he called himself the friend of your father, he better loved the most worthless stirk in his herd than he did the life-blood of MacTavish Mhor. Use his services, therefore, and pay him for them; for it is thus we should deal with the unworthy. But take my counsel, and trust him not."

Hamish could not suppress a sigh, which seemed to Elspat

to intimate that the caution came too late. "What have you done with him?" she continued, eager and alarmed. "I had money of him, and he gives not that without value: he is none of those who exchange barley for chaff. Oh, if you repent you of your bargain, and if it be one which you may break off without disgrace to your truth or your manhood, take back his silver, and trust not to his fair words."

"It may not be, mother," said Hamish; "I do not repent my engagement, unless that it must make me leave you soon."

"Leave me! how leave me? Silly boy, think you I know not what duty belongs to the wife or mother of a daring man? Thou art but a boy yet; and when thy father had been the dread of the country for twenty years, he did not despise my company and assistance, but often said my help was worth that of two strong gillies."

"It is not on that score, mother; but since I must leave the country——"

"Leave the country!" replied his mother, interrupting him; "and think you that I am like a bush, that is rooted to the soil where it grows, and must die if carried elsewhere? I have breathed other winds than these of Ben Cruachan. I have followed your father to the wilds of Ross and the impenetrable deserts of Y Mac Y Mhor. Tush, man, my limbs, old as they are, will bear me as far as your young feet can trace the way."

"Alas, mother," said the young man, with a faltering accent; "but to cross the sea——"

"The sea! Who am I that I should fear the sea? Have I never been in a birling in my life—never known the Sound of Mull, the Isles of Treshormish, and the rough rocks of Harris?"

"Alas, mother, I go far, far from all of these. I am enlisted in one of the new regiments, and we go against the French in America."

"Enlisted!" uttered the astonished mother—"against *my* will—without *my* consent? You could not—you would not"—then rising up, and assuming a posture of almost imperial command, "Hamish, you DARED not!"

"Despair, mother, dares everything," answered Hamish, in a tone of melancholy resolution. "What should I do here, where I can scarce get bread for myself and you, and when the times are growing daily worse? Would you but sit down and listen, I would convince you I have acted for the best."

With a bitter smile Elspat sat down, and the same severe, ironical expression was on her features as, with her lips firmly closed, she listened to his vindication.

Hamish went on, without being disconcerted by her expected displeasure. "When I left you, dearest mother, it was to go to MacPhadraick's house; for, although I knew he is crafty and worldly, after the fashion of the Sassenach, yet he is wise, and I thought how he would teach me, as it would cost him nothing, in which way I could mend our estate in the world."

"Our estate in the world!" said Elspat, losing patience at the word; "and went you to a base fellow with a soul no better than that of a cowherd to ask counsel about your conduct? Your father asked none, save of his courage and his sword."

"Dearest mother," answered Hamish, "how shall I convince you that you live in this land of our fathers as if our fathers were yet living? You walk as it were in a dream, surrounded by the phantoms of those who have been long with the dead. When my father lived and fought, the great respected the man of the strong right hand, and the rich feared him. He had protection from MacCallan Mhor and from Caberfae,* and tribute from meaner men. That is ended, and his son would only earn a disgraceful and unpitied death by the practises which gave his father credit and power among those who wear the breacan. The land is conquered, its lights are quenched—Glengarry, Lochiel, Perth, Lord Lewis, all the high chiefs, are dead or in exile. We may mourn for it, but we cannot help it. Bonnet, broadsword, and sporran, power, strength, and wealth, were all lost on Drummossie Muir.†

"It is false!" said Elspat, fiercely; "you, and such-like dastardly spirits, are quelled by your own faint hearts, not by the strength of the enemy: you are like the fearful waterfowl, to whom the least cloud in the sky seems the shadow of the eagle."

"Mother," said Hamish, proudly, "lay not faint heart to my charge. I go where men are wanted who have strong arms and bold hearts too. I leave a desert for a land where I may gather fame."

"And you leave your mother to perish in want, age, and solitude," said Elspat, essaying successively every means of

* Caberfae—*Anglicé*, the Stag's head, the Celtic designation for the arms of the family of the high chief of Seaforth.

† The battlefield of Culloden (*Laing*).

moving a resolution which she began to see was more deeply rooted than she had at first thought.

"Not so, neither," he answered; "I leave you to comfort and certainty, which you have yet never known. Barcaldine's son is made a leader, and with him I have enrolled myself; MacPhadraick acts for him, and raises men, and finds his own in doing it."

"That is the truest word of the tale, were all the rest as false as hell," said the old woman, bitterly.

"But we are to find our good in it also," continued Hamish; "for Barcaldine is to give you a shielding in his wood of Letterfindreight, with grass for your goats, and a cow, when you please to have one, on the common; and my own pay, dearest mother, though I am far away, will do more than provide you with meal, and with all else you can want. Do not fear for me. I enter a private gentleman; but I will return, if hard fighting and regular duty can deserve it, an officer, and with half a dollar a day."

"Poor child!" replied Elspat, in a tone of pity mingled with contempt, "and you trust MacPhadraick?"

"I might, mother," said Hamish, the dark red color of his race crossing his forehead and cheeks, "for MacPhadraick knows the blood which flows in my veins, and is aware that, should he break trust with you, he might count the days which could bring Hamish back to Breadalbane, and number those of his life within three suns more. I would kill him at his own hearth, did he break his word with me —I would, by the great Being who made us both!"

The look and attitude of the young soldier for a moment overawed Elspat; she was unused to see him express a deep and bitter mood, which reminded her so strongly of his father, but she resumed her remonstrances in the same taunting manner in which she had commenced them.

"Poor boy!" she said; "and you think that at the distance of half the world your threats will be heard or thought of! But, go—go—place your neck under him of Hanover's yoke,against whom every true Gael fought to the death. Go, disown the royal Stuart, for whom your father, and his fathers, and your mother's fathers, have crimsoned many a field with their blood. Go, put your head under the belt of one of the race of Dermid, whose children murdered—— Yes," she added, with a wild shriek, "murdered your mother's fathers in their peaceful dwellings in Glencoe! Yes," she again exclaimed, with a wilder and shriller scream, "I was then unborn, but my mother has told me, and I

attended to the voice of *my* mother—well I remember her words! They came in peace, and were received in friendship, and blood and fire arose, and screams and murder!" *

"Mother," answered Hamish, mournfully, but with a decided tone, "all that I have thought over; there is not a drop of the blood of Glencoe on the noble hand of Barcaldine—with the unhappy house of Glenlyon the curse remains, and on them God hath avenged it."

"You speak like the Saxon priest already," replied his mother; "will you not better stay, and ask a kirk from MacCallan Mhor, that you may preach forgiveness to the race of Dermid?"

"Yesterday was yesterday," answered Hamish, "and to-day is to-day. When the clans are crushed and confounded together, it is well and wise that their hatreds and their feuds should not survive their independence and their power. He that cannot execute vengeance like a man should not harbor useless enmity like a craven. Mother, young Barcaldine is true and brave; I know that MacPhadraick counseled him that he should not let me take leave of you, lest you dissuaded me from my purpose; but he said, 'Hamish McTavish is the son of a brave man, and he will not break his word.' Mother, Barcaldine leads an hundred of the bravest of the sons of the Gael in their native dress, and with their fathers' arms, heart to heart, shoulder to shoulder. I have sworn to go with him. He has trusted me, and I will trust him."

At this reply, so firmly and resolvedly pronounced, Elspat remained like one thunderstruck and sunk in despair. The arguments which she had considered so irresistibly conclusive had recoiled like a wave from a rock. After a long pause, she filled her son's quaigh, and presented it to him with an air of dejected deference and submission.

"Drink," she said, "to thy father's roof-tree ere you leave it forever; and tell me, since the chains of a new king, and of a new chief, whom your fathers knew not save as mortal enemies, are fastened upon the limbs of your father's son—tell me how many links you count upon them?"

Hamish took the cup, but looked at her as if uncertain of her meaning. She proceeded in a raised voice. "Tell me, she said, "for I have a right to know, for how many days the will of those you have made your masters permits me to look upon you? In other words, how many are the days of my life; for, when you leave me, the earth has nought besides worth living for."

* See Massacre of Glencoe. Note 28.

"Mother," replied Hamish McTavish, "for six days I may remain with you, and if you will set out with me on the fifth, I will conduct you in safety to your new dwelling. But if you remain here, then I will depart on the seventh by daybreak; then, as at the last moment, I MUST set out for Dunbarton, for if I appear not on the eighth day, I am subject to punishment as a deserter, and am dishonored as a soldier and a gentleman."

"Your father's foot," she answered, "was free as the wind on the heath; it were as vain to say to him, 'Where goest thou?' as to ask that viewless driver of the clouds, 'Wherefore blowest thou?' Tell me under what penalty thou must—since go thou must and go thou wilt—return to thy thraldom?"

"Call it not thraldom, mother; it is the service of an honorable soldier—the only service which is now open to the son of MacTavish Mhor."

"Yet say what is the penalty if thou shouldst not return?" replied Elspat.

"Military punishment as a deserter," answered Hamish, writhing, however, as his mother failed not to observe, under some internal feelings, which she resolved to probe to the uttermost.

"And that," she said, with assumed calmness, which her glancing eye disowned, "is the punishment of a disobedient hound, is it not?"

"Ask me no more, mother," said Hamish; "the punishment is nothing to one who will never deserve it."

"To me it is something," replied Elspat, "since I know better than thou, that, where there is power to inflict, there is often the will to do so without cause. I would pray for thee, Hamish, and I must know against what evils I should beseech Him who leaves none unguarded to protect thy youth and simplicity."

"Mother," said Hamish, "it signifies little to what a criminal may be exposed, if a man is determined not to be such. Our highland chiefs used also to punish their vassals, and, as I have heard, severely. Was it not Lachlan MacIan, whom we remember of old, whose head was struck off by order of his chieftain for shooting at the stag before him?"

"Ay," said Elspat, "and right he had to lose it, since he dishonored the father of the people even in the face of the assembled clan. But the chiefs were noble in their ire: they punished with the sharp blade, and not with the baton. Their punishments drew blood, but they did not infer

dishonor. Canst thou say the same for the laws under whose yoke thou hast placed thy freeborn neck ?"

"I cannot, mother—I cannot," said Hamish, mournfully. "I saw them punish a Sassenach for deserting, as they called it, his banner. He was scourged, I own it—scourged like a hound who has offended an imperious master. I was sick at the sight, I confess it. But the punishment of dogs is only for those worse than dogs, who know not how to keep their faith."

"To this infamy, however, thou hast subjected thyself, Hamish," replied Elspat, "if thou shouldst give, or thy officers take, measure of offense against thee. I speak no more to thee on thy purpose. Were the sixth day from this morning's sun my dying day, and thou wert to stay to close mine eyes, thou wouldst run the risk of being lashed like a dog at a post—yes ! unless thou hadst the gallant heart to leave me to die alone, and upon my desolate hearth, the last spark of thy father's fire and of thy forsaken mother's life to be extinguished together !"

Hamish traversed the hut with an impatient and angry pace, "Mother," he said at length, "concern not yourself about such things. I cannot be subjected to such infamy, for never will I deserve it ; and were I threatened with it, I should know how to die before I was so far dishonored."

"There spoke the son of the husband of my heart !" replied Elspat ; and she changed the discourse, and seemed to listen in melancholy acquiescence when her son reminded her how short the time was which they were permitted to pass in each other's society, and entreated that it might be spent without useless and unpleasant recollections respecting the circumstances under which they must soon be separated.

Elspat was now satisfied that her son, with some of his father's other properties, preserved the haughty masculine spirit which rendered it impossible to divert him from a resolution which he had deliberately adopted. She assumed, therefore, an exterior of apparent submission to their inevitable separation ; and if she now and then broke out into complaints and murmurs, it was either that she could not altogether suppress the natural impetuosity of her temper, or because she had the wit to consider that a total and unreserved acquiescence might have seemed to her son constrained and suspicious, and induced him to watch and defeat the means by which she still hoped to prevent his leaving her. Her ardent, though selfish, affection for her son, incapable of being qualified by a regard for the true interests

of the unfortunate object of her attachment, resembled the instinctive fondness of the animal race for their offspring; and diving little farther into futurity than one of the inferior creatures, she only felt that to be separated from Hamish was to die.

In the brief interval that permitted them, Elspat exhausted every art which affection could devise to render agreeable to him the space which they were apparently to spend with each other. Her memory carried her far back into former days, and her stores of legendary history, which furnish at all times a principal amusement of the Highlander in his moments of repose, were augmented by an unusual acquaintance with the songs of ancient bards, and traditions of the most approved seannachies and tellers of tales. Her officious attentions to her son's accommodation, indeed, were so unremitted as almost to give him pain; and he endeavored quietly to prevent her from taking so much personal toil in selecting the blooming heath for his bed, or preparing the meal for his refreshment. "Let me alone, Hamish," she would reply on such occasions; "you follow your own will in departing from your mother, let your mother have hers in doing what gives her pleasure while you remain."

So much she seemed to be reconciled to the arrangements which he had made in her behalf, that she could hear him speak to her of her removing to the lands of Green Colin, as the gentleman was called on whose estate he had provided her an asylum. In truth, however, nothing could be farther from her thoughts. From what he had said during their first violent dispute, Elspat had gathered that, if Hamish returned not by the appointed time permitted by his furlough, he would incur the hazard of corporal punishment. Were he placed within the risk of being thus dishonored, she was well aware that he would never submit to the disgrace by a return to the regiment where it might be inflicted. Whether she looked to any farther probable consequences of her unhappy scheme cannot be known; but the partner of MacTavish Mhor, in all his perils and wanderings, was familiar with an hundred instances of resistance or escape, by which one brave man, amidst a land of rocks, lakes, and mountains, dangerous passes, and dark forests, might baffle the pursuit of hundreds. For the future, therefore, she feared nothing; her sole engrossing object was to prevent her son from keeping his word with his commanding-officer.

With this secret purpose, she evaded the proposal which Hamish repeatedly made, that they should set out together to take possessiom of her new abode ; and she resisted it upon grounds apparently so natural to her character that her son was neither alarmed nor displeased. "Let me not," she said, "in the same short week, bid farewell to my only son and to the glen in which I have so long dwelt. Let my eye, when dimmed with weeping for thee, still look around, for awhile at least, upon Loch Awe and on Ben Cruachan."

Hamish yielded the more willingly to his mother's humor in this particular, that one or two persons who resided in a neighboring glen, and had given their sons to Barcaldine's levy, were also to be provided for on the estate of the chieftain, and it was apparently settled that Elspat was to take her journey along with them when they should remove to their new residence. Thus, Hamish believed that he had at once indulged his mother's humor and ensured her safety and accommodation. But she nourished in her mind very different thoughts and projects !

The period of Hamish's leave of absence was fast approaching, and more than once he proposed to depart, in such time as to ensure his gaining easily and early Dunbarton, the town where were the headquarters of his regiment. But still his mother's entreaties, his own natural disposition to linger among scenes long dear to him, and, above all, his firm reliance in his speed and activity, induced him to protract his departure till the sixth day, being the very last which he could possibly afford to spend with his mother, if indeed he meant to comply with the conditions of his furlough.

CHAPTER V

> But for your son, believe it—oh, believe it—
> Most dangerously you have with him prevailed,
> If not most mortal to him.
>
> *Coriolanus.*

On the evening which preceded his proposed departure, Hamish walked down to the river with his fishing-rod, to practise in the Awe, for the last time, a sport in which he excelled, and to find, at the same time, the means for making one social meal with his mother on something better than their ordinary cheer. He was as successful as usual, and soon killed a fine salmon. On his return homeward an incident befell him, which he afterwards related as ominous, though probably his heated imagination, joined to the universal turn of his countrymen for the marvelous, exaggerated into superstitious importance some very ordinary and accidental circumstance.

In the path which he pursued homeward, he was surprised to observe a person, who, like himself, was dressed and armed after the old Highland fashion. The first idea that struck him was, that the passenger belonged to his own corps, who, levied by government, and bearing arms under royal authority, were not amenable for breach of the statutes against the use of the Highland garb or weapons. But he was struck on perceiving, as he mended his pace to make up to his supposed comrade meaning to request his company for the next day's journey, that the stranger wore a white cockade, the fatal badge which was proscribed in the Highlands. The stature of the man was tall, and there was something shadowy in the outline, which added to his size; and his mode of motion, which rather resembled gliding than walking, impressed Hamish with superstitious fears concerning the character of the being which thus passed before him in the twilight. He no longer strove to make up to the stranger, but contented himself with keeping him in view, under the superstition common to the Highlanders, that you ought neither to intrude yourself on such supernatural apparitions as you may witness, nor avoid their presence, but leave it to themselves to withhold or extend their communication, as their power may permit, or the purpose of their commission require.

Upon an elevated knoll by the side of the road, just where the pathway turned down to Elspat's hut, the stranger made a pause, and seemed to await Hamish's coming up. Hamish, on his part, seeing it was necessary he should pass the object of his suspicion, mustered up his courage, and approached the spot where the stranger had placed himself, who first pointed to Elspat's hut, and made, with arm and head, a gesture prohibiting Hamish to approach it, then stretched his hand to the road which led to the southward, with a motion which seemed to enjoin his instant departure in that direction. In a moment afterwards the plaided form was gone—Hamish did not exactly say vanished, because there were rocks and stunted trees enough to have concealed him; but it was his own opinion that he had seen the spirit of MacTavish Mhor, warning him to commence his instant journey to Dunbarton, without waiting till morning, or again visiting his mother's hut.

In fact, so many accidents might arise to delay his journey, especially where there many ferries, that it became his settled purpose, though he could not depart without bidding his mother adieu, that he neither could nor would abide longer than for that object; and that the first glimpse of next day's sun should see him many miles advanced towards Dunbarton. He descended the path, therefore, and entering the cottage, he communicated, in a hasty and troubled voice, which indicated mental agitation, his determination to take his instant departure. Somewhat to his surprise, Elspat appeared not to combat his purpose, but she urged him to take some refreshment ere he left her forever. He did so hastily, and in silence, thinking on the approaching separation, and scarce yet believing it would take place without a final struggle with his mother's fondness. To his surprise, she filled the quaigh with liquor for his parting cup.

"Go," she said, "my son, since such is thy settled purpose; but first stand once more on thy mother's hearth, the flame on which will be extinguished long ere thy foot shall again be placed there."

"To your health, mother!" said Hamish, "and may we meet again in happiness, in spite of your ominous words."

"It were better not to part," said his mother, watching him as he quaffed the liquor, of which he would have held it ominous to have left a drop.

"And now," she said, muttering the words to herself, "go—if thou canst go."

"Mother," said Hamish, as he replaced on the table the

empty quaigh, "thy drink is pleasant to the taste, but it takes away the strength which it ought to give."

"Such is its first effect, my son," replied Elspat; "but lie down on that soft heather couch, shut your eyes but for a moment, and, in the sleep of an hour, you shall have more refreshment than in the ordinary repose of three whole nights, could they be blended into one."

"Mother," said Hamish, upon whose brain the potion was now taking rapid effect, "give me my bonnet, I must kiss you and begone; yet it seems as if my feet were nailed to the floor."

"Indeed," said his mother, "you will be instantly well, if you will sit down for half an hour—but half an hour; it is eight hours to dawn, and dawn were time enough for your father's son to begin such a journey."

"I must obey you, mother—I feel I must," said Hamish, inarticulately; "but call me when the moon rises."

He sat down on the bed, reclined back, and almost instantly was fast asleep. With the throbbing glee of one who has brought to an end a difficult and troublesome enterprise, Elspat proceeded tenderly to arrange the plaid of the unconscious slumberer, to whom her extravagant affection was doomed to be so fatal, expressing, while busied in her office, her delight in tones of mingled tenderness and triumph. "Yes," she said, "calf of my heart, the moon shall arise and set to thee, and so shall the sun; but not to light thee from the land of thy fathers, or tempt thee to serve the foreign prince or the feudal enemy. To no son of Dermid shall I be delivered, to be fed like a bondswoman; but he who is my pleasure and my pride shall be my guard and my protector. They say the Highlands are changed; but I see Ben Cruachan rear his crest as high as ever into the evening sky, no one hath yet herded his kine on the depth of Loch Awe, and yonder oak does not yet bend like a willow. The children of the mountains will be such as their fathers, until the mountains themselves shall be leveled with the strath. In these wild forests, which used to support thousands of the brave, there is still surely subsistence and refuge left for one aged woman and one gallant youth, of the ancient race and the ancient manners."

While the misjudging mother thus exulted in the success of her stratagem, we may mention to the reader, that it was founded on the acquaintance with drugs and simples which Elspat, accomplished in all things belonging to the wild life which she had led, possessed in an uncommon degree, and

which she exercised for various purposes. With the herbs, which she know how to select as well as how to distil, she could relieve more diseases than a regular medical person could easily believe. She applied some to dye the bright colors of the tartan, from others she compounded draughts of various powers, and unhappily possessed the secret of one which was strongly soporific. Upon the effects of this last concoction, as the reader doubtless has anticipated, she reckoned with security on delaying Hamish beyond the period for which his return was appointed ; and she trusted to his horror for the apprehended punishment to which he was thus rendered liable to prevent him from returning at all.

Sound and deep, beyond natural rest, was the sleep of Hamish MacTavish on that eventful evening, but not such the repose of his mother. Scarce did she close her eyes from time to time, but she awakened again with a start, in the terror that her son had arisen and departed ; and it was only on approaching his couch, and hearing his deep-drawn and regular breathing, that she reassured herself of the security of the repose in which he was plunged.

Still, dawning, she feared, might awaken him, notwithstanding the unusual strength of the potion with which she had drugged his cup. If there remained a hope of mortal man accomplishing the journey, she was aware that Hamish would attempt it, though he were to die from fatigue upon the road. Animated by this new fear, she studied to exclude the light, by stopping all the crannies and crevices through which, rather than through any regular entrance, the morning beams might find access to her miserable dwelling ; and this in order to detain amid its wants and wretchedness the being on whom, if the world itself had been at her disposal, she would have joyfully conferred it.

Her pains were bestowed unnecessarily. The sun rose high above the heavens, and not the fleetest stag in Breadalbane, were the hounds at his heels, could have sped, to save his life, so fast as would have been necessary to keep Hamish's appointment. Her purpose was fully attained : her son's return within the period assigned was impossible. She deemed it equally impossible that he would ever dream of returning, standing, as he must now do, in the danger of an infamous punishment. By degrees, and at different times, she had gained from him a full acquaintance with the predicament in which he would be placed by failing to appear on the day appointed, and the very small hope he could entertain of being treated with lenity.

It is well known, that the great and wise Earl of Chatham prided himself on the scheme by which he drew together for the defense of the colonies those hardly Highlanders who, until his time, had been the objects of doubt, fear and suspicion on the part of each successive administration. But some obstacles occurred, from the peculiar habits and temper of this people, to the execution of his patriotic project. By nature and habit, every Highlander was accustomed to the use of arms, but at the same time totally unaccustomed to, and impatient of, the restraints imposed by discipline upon regular troops. They were a species of militia, who had no conception of a camp as their only home. If a battle was lost, they dispersed to save themselves, and look out for the safety of their families; if won, they went back to their glens to hoard up their booty, and attend to their cattle and their farms. The privilege of going and coming at pleasure they would not be deprived of even by their chiefs, whose authority was in most other respects so despotic. It followed as a matter of course that the new-levied Highland recruits could scarce be made to comprehend the nature of a military engagement which compelled a man to serve in the army longer than he pleased; and perhaps, in many instances, sufficient care was not taken at enlisting to explain to them the permanency of the engagement which they came under, lest such a disclosure should induce them to change their mind. Desertions were therefore become numerous from the newly-raised regiment, and the veteran general who commanded at Dunbarton saw no better way of checking them than by causing an unusually severe example to be made of a deserter from an English corps. The young Highland regiment was obliged to attend upon the punishment, which struck a people peculiarly jealous of personal honor with equal horror and disgust, and not unnaturally indisposed some of them to the service. The old general, however, who had been regularly bred in the German wars, stuck to his own opinion, and gave out in orders that the first Highlander who might either desert or fail to appear at the expiry of his furlough should be brought to the halberds, and punished like the culprit whom they had seen in that condition. No man doubted that General —— would keep his word rigorously whatever severity was required; and Elspat, therefore, knew that her son, when he perceived that due compliance with his orders was impossible, must at the same time consider the degrading punishment denounced against his

defection as inevitable, should he place himself within the general's power.*

When noon was well passed, new apprehensions came on the mind of the lonely woman. Her son still slept under the influence of the draught; but what if, being stronger than she had ever known it administered, his health or his reason should be affected by its potency? For the first time, likewise, notwithstanding her high ideas on the subject of parental authority, she began to dread the resentment of her son, whom her heart told her she had wronged. Of late, she had observed that his temper was less docile, and his determinations, especially upon this late occasion of his enlistment, independently formed, and then boldly carried through. She remembered the stern wilfulness of his father when he accounted himself ill-used, and began to dread that Hamish, upon finding the deceit she had put upon him, might resent it even to the extent of casting her off, and pursuing his own course through the world alone. Such were the alarming and yet the reasonable apprehensions which began to crowd upon the unfortunate woman, after the apparent success of her ill-advised stratagem.

It was near the evening when Hamish first awoke, and then he was far from being in the full possession either of his mental or bodily powers. From his vague expressions and disordered pulse, Elspat at first experienced much apprehension; but she used such expedients as her medical knowledge suggested; and in the course of the night she had the satisfaction to see him sink once more into a deep sleep, which probably carried off the greater part of the effects of the drug, for about sunrising she heard him arise and call to her for his bonnet. This she had purposely removed, from a fear that he might awaken and depart in the night-time, without her knowledge.

"My bonnet—my bonnet," cried Hamish; "it is time to take farewell. Mother, your drink was too strong. The sun is up; but with the next morning I will still see the double summit of the ancient dun. My bonnet—my bonnet! mother, I must be instant in my departure." These expressions made it plain that poor Hamish was unconscious that two nights and a day had passed since he had drained the fatal quaigh, and Elspat had now to venture on what she felt as the almost perilous, as well as painful, task of explaining her machinations.

* See Fidelity of the Highlanders. Note 29.

"Forgive me, my son," she said, approaching Hamish, and taking him by the hand with an air of deferential awe, which perhaps she had not always used to his father, even when in his moody fits.

"Forgive you, mother—for what?" said Hamish, laughing; "for giving me a dram that was too strong, and which my head still feels this morning, or for hiding my bonnet to keep me an instant longer? Nay, do *you* forgive *me*. Give me the bonnet, and let that be done which now must be done. Give me my bonnet, or I go without it; surely I am not to be delayed by so trifling a want as that—I, who have gone for years with only a strap of deer's hide to tie back my hair. Trifle not, but give it me, or I must go bareheaded, since to stay is impossible."

"My son," said Elspat, keeping fast hold of his hand, "what is done cannot be recalled: could you borrow the wings of yonder eagle, you would arrive at the dun too late for what you propose—too soon for what awaits you there. You believe you see the sun rising for the first time since you have seen him set, but yesterday beheld him climb Ben Cruachan, though your eyes were closed to his light."

Hamish cast upon his mother a wild glance of extreme terror, then instantly recovering himself, said, "I am no child to be cheated out of my purpose by such tricks as these. Farewell, mother, each moment is worth a lifetime."

"Stay," she said, "my dear—my deceived son! rush not on infamy and ruin. Yonder I see the priest upon the highroad on his white horse; ask him the day of the month and week—let him decide between us.

With the speed of an eagle, Hamish darted up the acclivity, and stood by the minister of Glenorquhy, who was pacing out thus early to administer consolation to a distressed family near Bunawe.

The good man was somewhat startled to behold an armed Highlander, then so unusual a sight, and apparently much agitated, stop his horse by the bridle, and ask him with a faltering voice the day of the week and month. "Had you been where you should have been yesterday, young man," replied the clergyman, "you would have known that it was God's Sabbath; and that this is Monday, the second day of the week, and twenty-first of the month."

"And this is true?" said Hamish.

"As true," answered the surprised minister, "as that I yesterday preached the Word of God to this parish. What

ails you, young man ? are you sick ? are you in your right mind ? "

Hamish made no answer, only repeated to himself the first expression of the clergyman— "Had you been where you should have been yesterday ;" and so saying, he let go the bridle, turned from the road, and descended the path towards the hut, with the look and pace of one who was going to execution. The minister looked after him with surprise ; but although he knew the inhabitant of the hovel, the character of Elspat had not invited him to open any communication with her, because she was generally reputed a Papist, or rather one indifferent to all religion, except some superstitious observances which had been handed down from her parents. On Hamish the Reverend Mr. Tyrie had bestowed instructions when he was occasionally thrown in his way, and if the seed fell among the brambles and thorns of a wild and uncultivated disposition, it had not yet been entirely checked or destroyed. There was something so ghastly in the present expression of the youth's features, that the good man was tempted to go down to the hovel, and inquire whether any distress had befallen the inhabitants, in which his presence might be consoling and his ministry useful. Unhappily he did not persevere in this resolution, which might have saved a great misfortune, as he would have probably become a mediator for the unfortunate young man ; but a recollection of the wild moods of such Highlanders as had been educated after the old fashion of the country prevented his interesting himself in the widow and son of the far-dreaded robber MacTavish Mhor ; and he thus missed an opportunity, which he afterwards sorely repented, of doing much good.

When Hamish MacTavish entered his mother's hut, it was only to throw himself on the bed he had left, and exclaiming, "Undone—undone !" to give vent, in cries of grief and anger, to his deep sense of the deceit which had been practised on him, and of the cruel predicament to which he was reduced.

Elspat was prepared for the first explosion of her son's passion, and said to herself, "It is but the mountain torrent swelled by the thunder-shower. Let us sit and rest us by the bank ; for all its present tumult, the time will soon come when we may pass it dryshod." She suffered his complaints and his reproaches, which were, even in the midst of his agony, respectful and affectionate, to die away without returning any answer ; and when, at length, having exhausted

all the exclamations of sorrow which his language, copious in expressing the feelings of the heart, affords to the sufferer, he sunk into a gloomy silence, she suffered the interval to continue near an hour ere she approached her son's couch.

"And now," she said at length, with a voice in which the authority of the mother was qualified by her tenderness, "have you exhausted your idle sorrows, and are you able to place what you have gained against what you have lost? Is the false son of Dermid your brother, or the father of your tribe, that you weep because you cannot bind yourself to his belt, and become one of those who must do his bidding? Could you find in your yonder distant country the lakes and the mountains that you leave behind you here? Can you hunt the deer of Breadalbane in the forests of America, or will the ocean afford you the silver-scaled salmon of the Awe? Consider, then, what is your loss, and, like a wise man, set it against what you have won."

"I have lost all, mother," replied Hamish, "since I have broken my word and lost my honor. I might tell my tale, but who—oh, who would believe me?" The unfortunate young man again clasped his hands together, and, pressing them to his forehead, hid his face upon the bed.

Elspat was now really alarmed, and perhaps wished the fatal deceit had been left unattempted. She had no hope or refuge saving in the eloquence of persuasion, of which she possessed no small share, though her total ignorance of the world as it actually existed rendered its energy unavailing. She urged her son, by every tender epithet which a parent could bestow, to take care for his own safety.

"Leave me," she said, "to baffle your pursuers. I will save your life—I will save your honor. I will tell them that my fair-haired Hamish fell from the 'corrie dhu' (black precipice) into the gulf, of which human eye never beheld the bottom. I will tell them this, and I will fling your plaid on the thorns which grow on the brink of the precipice, that they may believe my words. They will believe, and they will return to the dun of the double-crest; for though the Saxon drum can call the living to die, it cannot recall the dead to their slavish standard. Then will we travel together far northward to the salt lakes of Kintail, and place glens and mountains betwixt us and the sons of Dermid. We will visit the shores of the dark lake, and my kinsmen—for was not my mother of the children of Kenneth, and will they not remember us with the old love?—my kinsmen will receive us with the affection of the olden time, which lives in

those distant glens, where the Gael still dwell in their nobleness, unmingled with the churl Saxons, or with the base brood that are their tools and their slaves."

The energy of the language, somewhat allied to hyperbole, even in its most ordinary expressions, now seemed almost too weak to afford Elspat the means of bringing out the splendid picture which she presented to her son of the land in which she proposed to him to take refuge. Yet the colors were few with which she could paint her Highland paradise. "The hills," she said, "were higher and more magnificent than those of Breadalbane; Ben Cruachan was but a dwarf to Skooroora. The lakes were broader and larger, and abounded not only with fish, but with the enchanted and amphibious animal which gives oil to the lamp.* The deer were larger and more numerous; the white-tusked boar, the chase of which the brave loved best, was yet to be roused in those western solitudes; the men were nobler, wiser, and stronger than the degenerate brood who lived under the Saxon banner. The daughters of the land were beautiful, with blue eyes and fair hair, and bosoms of snow, and out of these she would choose a wife for Hamish, of blameless descent, spotless fame, fixed and true affection, who should be in their summer bothy as a beam of the sun, and in their winter abode as the warmth of the needful fire."

Such were the topics with which Elspat strove to soothe the despair of her son, and to determine him, if possible, to leave the fatal spot, on which he seemed resolved to linger. The style of her rhetoric was poetical, but in other respects resembled that which, like other fond mothers, she had lavished on Hamish while a child or a boy, in order to gain his consent to do something he had no mind to; and she spoke louder, quicker, and more earnestly, in proportion as she began to despair of her words carrying conviction.

On the mind of Hamish her eloquence made no impression. He knew far better than she did the actual situation of the country, and was sensible that, though it might be possible to hide himself as a fugitive among more distant mountains, there was now no corner in the Highlands in which his father's profession could be practised, even if he had not adopted, from the improved ideas of the time when he lived, the opinion that the trade of the cateran was no longer the road to honor and distinction. Her words were therefore poured into regardless ears, and she exhausted herself in vain in the attempt

* The seals are considered by the Highlanders as enchanted princes.

to paint the regions of her mother's kinsmen in such terms as might tempt Hamish to accompany her thither. She spoke for hours, but she spoke in vain. She could extort no answer save groans, and sighs, and ejaculations expressing the extremity of despair.

At length, starting on her feet, and changing the monotonous tone in which she had chanted, as it were, the praises of the province of refuge into the short, stern language of eager passion—"I am a fool," she said, "to spend my words upon an idle, poor-spirited, unintelligent boy, who crouches like a hound to the lash. Wait here, and receive your taskmasters, and abide your chastisement at their hands; but do not think your mother's eyes will behold it. I could not see it and live. My eyes have looked often upon death, but never upon dishonor. Farewell, Hamish! We never meet again." She dashed from the hut like a lapwing, and perhaps for the moment actually entertained the purpose which she expressed, of parting with her son forever.

A fearful sight she would have been that evening to any who might have met her wandering through the wilderness like a restless spirit, and speaking to herself in language which will endure no translation. She rambled for hours, seeking rather than shunning the most dangerous paths. The precarious track through the morass, the dizzy path along the edge of the precipice, or by the banks of the gulfing river, were the roads which, far from avoiding, she sought with eagerness, and traversed with reckless haste. But the courage arising from despair was the means of saving the life which (though deliberate suicide was rarely practised in the Highlands) she was perhaps desirous of terminating. Her step on the verge of the precipice was firm as that of the wild goat. Her eye, in that state of excitation, was so keen as to discern, even amid darkness, the perils which noon would not have enabled a stranger to avoid.

Elspat's course was not directly forward, else she had soon been far from the bothy in which she had left her son. It was circuitous, for that hut was the center to which her heartstrings were chained, and though she wandered around it, she felt it impossible to leave the vicinity. With the first beams of morning, she returned to the hut. Awhile she paused at the wattled door, as if shamed that lingering fondness should have brought her back to the spot which she had left with the purpose of never returning; but there was yet more of fear than anxiety in her hesitation—of anxiety, lest her fair-haired son had suffered from the effects of

her potion; of fear, lest his enemies had come upon him in the night. She opened the door of the hut gently, and entered with noiseless step. Exhausted with his sorrow and anxiety, and not entirely relieved, perhaps, from the influence of the powerful opiate, Hamish Bean again slept the stern sound sleep by which the Indians are said to be overcome during the interval of their torments. His mother was scarcely sure that she actually discerned his form on the bed, scarce certain that her ear caught the sound of his breathing. With a throbbing heart, Elspat went to the fireplace in the center of the hut, where slumbered, covered with a piece of turf, the glimmering embers of the fire, never extinguished on a Scottish hearth until the indwellers leave the mansion forever.

"Feeble *greishogh,*" she said, as she lighted, by the help of a match, a splinter of bog-pine which was to serve the place of a candle—"weak greishogh, soon shalt thou be put out forever, and may Heaven grant that the life of Elspat MacTavish have no longer duration than thine!"

While she spoke, she raised the blazing light towards the bed, on which still laid the prostrate limbs of her son, in a posture that left it doubtful whether he slept or swooned. As she advanced towards him, the light flashed upon his eyes; he started up in an instant, made a stride forward with his naked dirk in his hand, like a man armed to meet a mortal enemy, and exclaimed, "Stand off!—on thy life, stand off!"

"It is the word and the action of my husband," answered Elspat; "and I know by his speech and his step the son of MacTavish Mhor."

"Mother," said Hamish, relapsing from his tone of desperate firmness into one of melancholy expostulation—"oh, dearest mother, wherefore have you returned hither?"

"Ask why the hind comes back to the fawn," said Elspat—"why the cat of the mountain returns to her lodge and her young. Know you, Hamish, that the heart of the mother only lives in the bosom of the child."

"Then will it soon cease to throb," said Hamish, "unless it can beat within a bosom that lies beneath the turf. Mother, do not blame me; if I weep, it is not for myself but for you, for my sufferings will soon be over; but yours—— O, who but Heaven shall set a boundary to them!"

Elspat shuddered and stepped backward, but almost instantly resumed her firm and upright position and her dauntless bearing.

"I thought thou wert a man but even now," she said, "and thou art again a child. Hearken to me yet, and let us leave this place together. Have I done thee wrong or injury? if so, yet do not avenge it so cruelly. See, Elspat MacTavish, who never kneeled before even to a priest, falls prostrate before her own son, and craves his forgiveness." And at once she threw herself on her knees before the young man, seized on his hand, and kissing it an hundred times, repeated as often, in heartbreaking accents, the most earnest entreaties for forgiveness. "Pardon," she exclaimed—"pardon, for the sake of your father's ashes—pardon, for the sake of the pain with which I bore thee, the care with which I nurtured thee! Hear it, Heaven, and behold it, earth—the mother asks pardon of her child, and she is refused!"

It was in vain that Hamish endeavored to stem this tide of passion, by assuring his mother, with the most solid asseverations, that he forgave entirely the fatal deceit which she had practised upon him.

"Empty words," she said—"idle protestations, which are but used to hide the obduracy of your resentment. Would you have me believe you, then leave the hut this instant,and retire from a country which every hour renders more dangerous. Do this, and I may think you have forgiven me; refuse it, and again I call on moon and stars, Heaven and earth, to witness the unrelenting resentment with which you prosecute your mother for a fault which, if it be one, arose out of love to you."

"Mother," said Hamish, "on this subject you move me not. I will fly before no man. If Barcaldine should send every Gael that is under his banner, here and in this place will I abide them; and when you bid me fly, you may as well command yonder mountain to be loosened from its foundations. Had I been sure of they road by which the are coming hither, I had spared them the pains of seeking me; but I might go by the mountain, while they perchance came by the lake. Here I will abide my fate; nor is there in Scotland a voice of power enough to bid me stir from hence, and be obeyed."

"Here, then, I also stay," said Elspat, rising up and speaking with assumed composure. "I have seen my husband's death; my eyelids shall not grieve to look on the fall of my son. But MacTavish Mhor died as became the brave, with his good sword in his right hand; my son will perish like the bullock that is driven to the shambles by the Saxon owner who has bought him for a price."

"Mother," said the unhappy young man, "you have taken my life—to that you have a right, for you gave it; but touch not my honor. It came to me from a brave train of ancestors, and should be sullied neither by man's deed nor woman's speech. What I shall do, perhaps I myself yet know not; but tempt me no farther by reproachful words; you have already made wounds more than you can ever heal."

"It is well, my son," said Elspat, in reply. "Expect neither farther complaint nor remonstrance from me; but let us be silent, and wait the chance which Heaven shall send us."

The sun arose on the next morning, and found the bothy silent as the grave. The mother and son had arisen, and were engaged each in their separate task—Hamish in preparing and cleaning his arms with the greatest accuracy, but with an air of deep dejection. Elspat, more restless in her agony of spirit, employed herself in making ready the food which the distress of yesterday had induced them both to dispense with for an unusual number of hours. She placed it on the board before her son so soon as it was prepared, with the word of a Gaelic poet—"Without daily food, the husbandman's plowshare stands still in the furrow; without daily food, the sword of the warrior is too heavy for his hand. Our bodies are our slaves, yet they must be fed if we would have their service. So spake in ancient days the Blind Bard to the warriors of Fion."

The young man made no reply, but he fed on what was placed before him, as if to gather strength for the scene which he was to undergo. When his mother saw that he had eaten what sufficed him, she again filled the fatal quaigh, and proffered it as the conclusion of the repast. But he started aside with a convulsive gesture, expressive at once of fear and abhorrence.

"Nay, my son," she said, "this time surely thou hast no cause of fear."

"Urge me not, mother," answered Hamish; "or put the leprous toad into a flagon, and I will drink; but from that accursed cup, and of that mind-destroying potion, never will I taste more!"

"At your pleasure, my son," said Elspat, haughtily, and began, with much apparent assiduity, the various domestic tasks which had been interrupted during the preceding day. Whatever was at her heart, all anxiety seemed banished from her looks and demeanor. It was but from an over-

activity of bustling exertion that it might have been perceived, by a close observer, that her actions were spurred by some internal cause of painful excitement; and such a spectator, too, might also have observed how often she broke off the snatches of songs or tunes which she hummed, apparently without knowing what she was doing, in order to cast a hasty glance from the door of the hut. Whatever might be in the mind of Hamish, his demeanor was directly the reverse of that adopted by his mother. Having finished the task of cleaning and preparing his arms, which he arranged within the hut, he sat himself down before the door of the bothy, and watched the opposite hill, like the fixed sentinel who expects the approach of an enemy. Noon found him in the same unchanged posture, and it was an hour after that period, when his mother, standing beside him, laid her hand on his shoulder, and said, in a tone indifferent, as if she had been talking of some friendly visit, "When dost thou expect them?"

"They cannot be here till the shadows fall long to the eastward," replied Hamish; "that is, even supposing the nearest party, commanded by Sergeant Allen Breack Cameron, has been commanded hither by express from Dunbarton, as it is most likely they will."

"Then enter beneath your mother's roof once more; partake the last time of the food which she has prepared; after this, let them come, and thou shalt see if thy mother is an useless encumbrance in the day of strife. Thy hand, practised as it is, cannot fire these arms so fast as I can load them; nay, if it is necessay, I do not myself fear the flash or the report, and my aim has been held fatal."

"In the name of Heaven, mother, meddle not with this matter!" said Hamish. "Allan Breack is a wise man and a kind one, and comes of a good stem. It may be, he can promise for our officers, that they will touch me with no infamous punishment; and if they offer me confinement in the dungeon, or death by the musket, to that I may not object."

"Alas, and wilt thou trust to their word, my foolish child? Remember the race of Dermid were ever fair and false, and no sooner shall they have gyves on thy hands than they will strip thy shoulders for the scourge."

"Save your advice, mother," said Hamish, sternly; "for me, my mind is made up."

But though he spoke thus, to escape the almost persecuting urgency of his mother, Hamish would have found it, at

that moment, impossible to say upon what course of conduct he had thus fixed. On one point alone he was determined —namely to abide his destiny, be [it] what it might, and not to add to the breach of his word, of which he had been involuntarily rendered guilty, by attempting to escape from punishment. This act of self-devotion he conceived to be due to his own honor and that of his countrymen. Which of his comrades would in future be trusted, if he should be considered as having broken his word, and betrayed the confidence of his officers? and whom but Hamish Bean MacTavish would the Gael accuse, for having verified and confirmed the suspicions which the Saxon general was well known to entertain against the good faith of the Highlanders? He was, therefore, bent firmly to abide his fate. But whether his intention was to yield himself peaceably into the hands of the party who should come to apprehend him, or whether he purposed, by a show of resistance, to provoke them to kill him on the spot, was a question which he could not himself have answered. His desire to see Barcaldine, and explain the cause of his absence at the appointed time, urged him to the one course; his fear of the degrading punishment, and of his mother's bitter upbraidings, strongly instigated the latter and the more dangerous purpose. He left it to chance to decide when the crisis should arrive; nor did he tarry long in expectation of the catastrophe.

Evening approached, the gigantic shadows of the mountains streamed in darkness towards the east, while their western peaks were still glowing with crimson and gold. The road which winds round Ben Cruachan was fully visible from the door of the bothy, when a party of five Highland soldiers, whose arms glanced in the sun, wheeled suddenly into sight from the most distant extremity, where the highway is hidden behind the mountain. One of the party walked a little before the other four, who marched regularly and in files, according to the rules of military discipline. There was no dispute, from the firelocks which they carried, and the plaids and bonnets which they wore, that they were a party of Hamish's regiment, under a non-commissioned officer; and there could be as little doubt of the purpose of their appearance on the banks of Loch Awe.

"They come briskly forward," said the widow of MacTavish Mhor; "I wonder how fast or how slow some of them will return again! But they are five, and it is too much odds for a fair field. Step back within the hut, my

son, and shoot from the loophole beside the door. Two you may bring down ere they quit the highroad for the footpath; there will remain but three, and your father, with my aid, has often stood against that number."

Hamish Bean took the gun which his mother offered, but did not stir from the door of the hut. He was soon visible to the party on the highroad, as was evident from their increasing their pace to a run; the files, however, still keeping together like coupled greyhounds, and advancing with great rapidity. In far less time than would have been accomplished by men less accustomed to the mountains, they had left the highroad, traversed the narrow path, and approached within pistol-shot of the bothy, at the door of which stood Hamish, fixed like a statue of stone, with his firelock in his hand; while his mother, placed behind him, and almost driven to frenzy by the violence of her passions, reproached him in the strongest terms which despair could invent for his want of resolution and faintness of heart. Her words increased the bitter gall which was arising in the young man's own spirit, as he observed the unfriendly speed with which his late comrades were eagerly making towards him, like hounds towards the stag when he is at bay. The untamed and angry passions which he inherited from father and mother were awakened by the supposed hostility of those who pursued him; and the restraint under which these passions had been hitherto held by his sober judgment began gradually to give way.

The sergeant now called to him, "Hamish Bean MacTavish, lay down your arms and surrender."

"Do *you* stand, Allan Breack Cameron, and command your men to stand, or it will be the worse for us all."

"Halt, men," said the sergeant, but continuing himself to advance. "Hamish, think what you do, and give up your gun; you may spill blood, but you cannot escape punishment."

"The scourge—the scourge, my son—beware the scourge!" whispered his mother.

"Take heed, Allan Breack," said Hamish. "I would not hurt you willingly, but I will not be taken unless you can assure me against the Saxon lash."

"Fool!" answered Cameron, "you know I cannot. Yet I will do all I can. I will say I met you on your return, and the punishment will be light; but give up your musket. Come on, men."

Instantly he rushed forward, extending his arm as if to

push aside the young man's leveled firelock. Elspat exclaimed, "Now, spare not your father's blood to defend your father's hearth!" Hamish fired his piece, and Cameron dropped dead. All these things happened, it might be said, in the same moment of time. The soldiers rushed forward and seized Hamish, who, seeming petrified with what he had done, offered not the least resistance. Not so his mother, who, seeing the men about to put handcuffs on her son, threw herself on the soldiers with such fury that it required two of them to hold her, while the rest secured the prisoner.

"Are you not an accursed creature," said one of the men to Hamish, "to have slain your best friend, who was contriving, during the whole march, how he could find some way of getting you off without punishment for your desertion?"

"Do you hear *that*, mother?" said Hamish, turning himself as much towards her as his bonds would permit; but the mother heard nothing, and saw nothing. She had fainted on the floor of her hut. Without waiting for her recovery, the party almost immediately began their homeward march towards Dunbarton, leading along with them their prisoner. They thought it necessary, however, to stay for a little space at the village of Dalmally, from which they despatched a party of the inhabitants to bring away the body of their unfortunate leader, while they themselves repaired to a magistrate to state what had happened, and require his instructions as to the farther course to be pursued. The crime being of a military character, they were instructed to march the prisoner to Dunbarton without delay.

The swoon of the mother of Hamish lasted for a length of time, the longer perhaps that her constitution, strong as it was, must have been much exhausted by her previous agitation of three days' endurance. She was roused from her stupor at length by female voices, which cried the coronach, or lament for the dead, with clapping of hands and loud exclamations; while the melancholy note of a lament, appropriate to the clan Cameron, played on the bagpipe, was heard from time to time.

Elspat started up like one awakened from the dead, and without any accurate recollection of the scene which had passed before her eyes. There were females in the hut, who were swathing the corpse in its bloody plaid before carrying it from the fatal spot. "Women," she said, starting up and interrupting their chant at once and their labor—"Tell me,

women, why sing you the dirge of MacDhonuil Dhu in the house of MacTavish Mhor?"

"She-wolf, be silent with thine ill-omened yell," answered one of the females, a relation of the deceased, "and let us do our duty to our beloved kinsman! There shall never be coronach cried or dirge played for thee or thy bloody wolf-burd. The ravens shall eat him from the gibbet, and the foxes and wildcats shall tear thy corpse upon the hill. Cursed be he that would sain your bones, or add a stone to your cairn!"

"Daughter of a foolish mother," answered the widow of MacTavish Mhor, "know that the gibbet with which you threaten us is no portion of our inheritance. For thirty years the 'black tree of the law,' whose apples are dead men's bodies, hungered after the beloved husband of my heart; but he died like a brave man, with the sword in his hand, and defrauded it of its hopes and its fruit."

"So shall it not be with thy child, bloody sorceress," replied the female mourner, whose passions were as violent as those of Elspat herself: "the ravens shall tear his fair hair to line their nests, before the sun sinks beneath the Treshornish islands."

These words recalled to Elspat's mind the whole history of the last three dreadful days. At first, she stood fixed as if the extremity of distress had converted her into stone; but in a minute the pride and violence of her temper, outbraved as she thought herself on her own threshold, enabled her to reply—"Yes, insulting hag, my fair-haired boy may die, but it will not be with a white hand: it has been dyed in the blood of his enemy, in the best blood of a Cameron—remember that—; and when you lay your dead in his grave, let it be his best epitaph, that he was killed by Hamish Bean for essaying to lay hands on the son of MacTavish Mhor on his own threshold. Farewell; the shame of defeat, loss, and slaughter remain with the clan that has endured it!"

The relative of the slaughtered Cameron raised her voice in reply; but Elspat, disdaining to continue the objurgation, or perhaps feeling her grief likely to overmaster her power of expressing her resentment, had left the hut, and was walking forth in the bright moonshine.

The females who were arranging the corpse of the slaughtered man hurried from their melancholy labor to look after her tall figure as it glided away among the cliffs. "I am glad she is gone," said one of the younger persons who assisted. "I would as soon dress a corpse when the

great Fiend himself—God sain us !—stood visibly before us, as when Elspat of the Tree is amongst us. Ay—ay, even overmuch intercourse hath she had with the Enemy in her day."

"Silly woman," answered the female who had maintained the dialogue with the departed Elspat, "thinkest thou that there is a worse fiend on earth, or beneath it, than the pride and fury of an offended woman, like yonder bloody-minded hag ? Know that blood has been as familiar to her as the dew to the mountain-daisy. Many and many a brave man has she caused to breathe their last for little wrong they had done to her or hers. But her hough-sinews are cut, now that her wolf-burd must, like a murderer as he is, make a murderer's end."

Whilst the women thus discoursed together, as they watched the corpse of Allan Breack Cameron, the unhappy cause of his death pursued her lonely way across the mountain. While she remained within sight of the bothy, she put a strong constraint on herself, that by no alteration of pace or gesture she might afford to her enemies the triumph of calculating the excess of her mental agitation, nay, despair. She stalked, therefore, with a slow rather than a swift step, and, holding herself upright, seemed at once to endure with firmness that woe which was passed and bid defiance to that which was about to come. But when she was beyond the sight of those who remained in the hut, she could no longer suppress the extremity of her agitation. Drawing her mantle wildly round her, she stopped at the first knoll, and climbing to its summit, extended her arms up to the bright moon, as if accusing Heaven and earth for her misfortunes, and uttered scream on scream, like those of an eagle whose nest has been plundered of her brood. Awhile she vented her grief in these inarticulate cries, then rushed on her way with a hasty and unequal step, in the vain hope of overtaking the party which was conveying her son a prisoner to Dunbarton. But her strength, superhuman as it seemed, failed her in the trial, nor was it possible for her, with her utmost efforts, to accomplish her purpose.

Yet she pressed onward, with all the speed which her exhausted frame could exert. When food became indispensable, she entered the first cottage. "Give me to eat," she said ; "I am the widow of MacTavish Mhor, I am the mother of Hamish MacTavish Bean—give me to eat, that I may once more see my fair-haired son." Her demand was never refused, though granted in many cases with a kind

of struggle between compassion and aversion in some of those to whom she applied, which was in others qualified by fear. The share she had had in occasioning the death of Allan Breack Cameron, which must probably involve that of her own son, was not accurately known ; but, from a knowledge of her violent passions and former habits of life, no one doubted that in one way or other she had been the cause of the catastrophe ; and Hamish Bean was considered, in the slaughter which he had committed, rather as the instrument than as the accomplice of his mother.

This general opinion of his countrymen was of little service to the unfortunate Hamish. As his captain, Green Colin, understood the manners and habits of his country, he had no difficulty in collecting from Hamish the particulars accompanying his supposed desertion, and the subsequent death of the non-commissioned officer. He felt the utmost compassion for a youth who had thus fallen a victim to the extravagant and fatal fondness of a parent. But he had no excuse to plead which could rescue his unhappy recruit from the doom which military discipline and the award of a court-martial denounced against him for the crime he had committed.

No time had been lost in their proceedings, and as little was interposed betwixt sentence and execution. General —— had determined to make a severe example of the first deserter who should fall into his power, and here was one who had defended himself by main force, and slain in the affray the officer sent to take him into custody. A fitter subject for punishment could not have occurred, and Hamish was sentenced to immediate execution. All which the interference of his captain in his favor could procure was that he should die a soldier's death ; for there had been a purpose of executing him upon the gibbet.

The worthy clergyman of Glenorquhy chanced to be at Dunbarton, in attendance upon some church-courts, at the time of this catastrophe. He visited his unfortunate parishioner in his dungeon, found him ignorant indeed, but not obstinate, and the answers which he received from him, when conversing on religious topics, were such as induced him doubly to regret that a mind naturally pure and noble should have remained unhappily so wild and uncultivated.

When he ascertained the real character and disposition of the young man, the worthy pastor made deep and painful reflections on his own shyness and timidity, which, arising out of the evil fame that attached to the lineage of Hamish,

had restrained him from charitably endeavoring to bring this strayed sheep within the great fold. While the good minister blamed his cowardice in times past, which had deterred him from risking his person, to save, perhaps, an immortal soul, he resolved no longer to be governed by such timid counsels, but to endeavor, by application to his officers, to obtain a reprieve, at least, if not a pardon, for the criminal, in whom he felt so unusually interested, at once from his docility of temper and his generosity of disposition.

Accordingly the divine sought out Captain Campbell at the barracks within the garrison. There was a gloomy melancholy on the brow of Green Colin, which was not lessened, but increased, when the clergyman stated his name, quality, and errand. "You cannot tell me better of the young man than I am disposed to believe," answered the Highland officer; "you cannot ask me to do more in his behalf than I am of myself inclined, and have already endeavored to do. But it is all in vain. General —— is half a Lowlander, half an Englishman. He has no idea of the high and enthusiastic character which in these mountains often brings exalted virtues in contact with great crimes, which, however, are less offenses of the heart than errors of the understanding. I have gone so far as to tell him, that in this young man he was putting to death the best and the bravest of my company, where all, or almost all, are good and brave. I explained to him by what strange delusion the culprit's apparent desertion was occasioned, and how little his heart was accessory to the crime which his hand unhappily committed. His answer was, 'These are Highland visions, Captain Campbell, as unsatisfactory and vain as those of the second-sight. An act of gross desertion may, in any case, be palliated under the plea of intoxication; the murder of an officer may be as easily colored over with that of temporory insanity. The example must be made, and if it has fallen on a man otherwise a good recruit, it will have the greater effect.' Such being the general's unalterable purpose," continued Captain Campbell, with a sigh, "be it your care, reverend sir, that your penitent prepare by break of day to-morrow for that great change which we shall all one day be subjected to."

"And for which," said the clergyman, "may God prepare us all, as I in my duty will not be wanting to this poor youth."

Next morning, as the very earliest beams of sunrise saluted the gray towers which crown the summit of that singu-

lar and tremendous rock, the soldiers of the new Highland regiment appeared on the parade, within the Castle of Dunbarton, and having fallen into order, began to move downward by steep staircases and narrow passages towards the external barrier-gate, which is at the very bottom of the rock. The wild wailings of the pibroch were heard at times, interchanged with the drums and fifes, which beat the "Dead March."

The unhappy criminal's fate did not, at first, excite that general sympathy in the regiment which would probably have arisen had he been executed for desertion alone. The slaughter of the unfortunate Allan Breack had given a different color to Hamish's offense; for the deceased was much beloved, and besides belonged to a numerous and powerful clan, of whom there were many in the ranks. The unfortunate criminal, on the contrary, was little known to, and scarcely connected with, any of his regimental companions. His father had been, indeed, distinguished for his strength and manhood; but he was of a broken clan, as those names were called who had no chief to lead them to battle.

It would have been almost impossible in another case to have turned out of the ranks of the regiment the party necessary for execution of the sentence; but the six individuals selected for that purpose were friends of the deceased, descended, like him, from the race of MacDhonuil Dhu; and while they prepared for the dismal task which their duty imposed, it was not without a stern feeling of gratified revenge. The leading company of the regiment began now to defile from the barrier-gate, and was followed by the others, each successively moving and halting according to the orders of the adjutant, so as to form three sides of an oblong square, with the ranks faced inwards. The fourth or blank side of the square was closed up by the huge and lofty precipice on which the castle rises. About the center of the procession, bare-headed, disarmed, and with his hands bound, came the unfortunate victim of military law. He was deadly pale, but his step was firm and his eye as bright as ever. The clergyman walked by his side; the coffin which was to receive his mortal remains was borne before him. The looks of his comrades were still, composed, and solemn. They felt for the youth, whose handsome form and manly yet submissive deportment had, as soon as he was distinctly visible to them, softened the hearts of many, even of some who had been actuated by vindictive feelings.

The coffin destined for the yet living body of Hamish Bean was placed at the bottom of the hollow square, about two yards distant from the foot of the precipice, which rises in that place as steep as a stone wall to the height of three or four hundred feet. Thither the prisoner was also led, the clergyman still continuing by his side, pouring forth exhortations of courage and consolation, to which the youth appeared to listen with respectful devotion. With slow, and, it seemed, almost unwilling, steps the firing party entered the square, and were drawn up facing the prisoner, about ten yards distant. The clergyman was now about to retire. "Think, my son," he said, "on what I have told you, and let your hope be rested on the anchor which I have given. You will then exchange a short and miserable existence here for a life in which you will experience neither sorrow nor pain. Is there aught else which you can entrust to me to execute for you?"

The youth looked at his sleeve-buttons. They were of gold, booty perhaps which his father had taken from some English officer during the civil wars. The clergyman disengaged them from his sleeves.

"My mother!" he said with some effort—"give them to my poor mother! See her, good father, and teach her what she should think of all this. Tell her Hamish Bean is more glad to die than ever he was to rest after the longest day's hunting. Farewell, sir—farewell!"

The good man could scarce retire from the fatal spot. An officer afforded him the support of his arm. At his last look towards Hamish, he beheld him alive and kneeling on the coffin; the few that were around him had all withdrawn. The fatal word was given, the rock rung sharp to the sound of the discharge, and Hamish, falling forward with a groan, died, it may be supposed, without almost a sense of the passing agony.

Ten or twelve of his own company then came forward, and laid with solemn reverence the remains of their comrade in the coffin, while the "Dead March" was again struck up, and the several companies, marching in single files, passed the coffin one by one, in order that all might receive from the awful spectacle the warning which it was peculiarly intended to afford. The regiment was then marched off the ground, and re-ascended the ancient cliff, their music, as usual on such occasions, striking lively strains, as if sorrow, or even deep thought, should as short a while as possible be the tenant of the soldier's bosom.

At the same time the small party which we before mentioned bore the bier of the ill-fated Hamish to his humble grave in a corner of the churchyard of Dunbarton, usually assigned to criminals. Here, among the dust of the guilty, lies a youth whose name, had he survived the ruin of the fatal events by which he was hurried into crime, might have adorned the annals of the brave.

The minister of Glenorquhy left Dunbarton immediately after he had witnessed the last scene of this melancholy catastrophe. His reason acquiesced in the justice of the sentence, which required blood for blood, and he acknowledged that the vindictive character of his countrymen required to be powerfully restrained by the strong curb of social law. But still he mourned over the individual victim. Who may arraign the bolt of Heaven when it bursts among the sons of the forest; yet who can refrain from mourning when it selects for the object of its blighting aim the fair stem of a young oak, that promised to be the pride of the dell in which it flourished? Musing on these melancholy events, noon found him engaged in the mountain passes, by which he was to return to his still distant home.

Confident in his knowledge of the country, the clergyman had left the main road, to seek one of those shorter paths which are only used by pedestrians, or by men, like the minister, mounted on the small, but sure-footed, hardy, and sagacious horses of the country. The place which he now traversed was in itself gloomy and desolate, and tradition had added to it the terror of superstition, by affirming it was haunted by an evil spirit, termed *Cloght-dearg*, that is, Redmantle, who at all times, but especially at noon and at midnight, traversed the glen, in emnity both to man and the inferior creation, did such evil as her power was permitted to extend to, and afflicted with ghostly terrors those whom she had not license otherwise to hurt.

The minister of Glenorquhy had set his face in opposition to many of these superstitions, which he justly thought were derived from the dark ages of Popery, perhaps even from those of paganism, and unfit to be entertained or believed by the Christians of an enlightened age. Some of his more attached parishioners considered him as too rash in opposing the ancient faith of their fathers; and though they honored the moral intrepidity of their pastor, they could not avoid entertaining and expressing fears that he would one day fall a victim to his temerity, and be torn to pieces in the glen of the Cloght-dearg, or some of those other haunted

wilds which he appeared rather to have a pride and pleasure in traversing alone, on the days and hours when the wicked spirits were supposed to have especial power over man and beast.

These legends came across the mind of the clergyman ; and, solitary as he was, a melancholy smile shaded his cheek, as he thought of the inconsistency of human nature, and reflected how many brave men, whom the yell of the pibroch would have sent headlong against fixed bayonets, as the wild bull rushes on his enemy, might have yet feared to encounter those visionary terrors, which he himself, a man of peace, and in ordinary perils no way remarkable for the firmness of his nerves, was now risking without hesitation.

As he looked around the scene of desolation, he could not but acknowledge, in his own mind, that it was not ill-chosen for the haunt of those spirits which are said to delight in solitude and desolation. The glen was so steep and narrow, that there was but just room for the meridian sun to dart a few scattered rays upon the gloomy and precarious stream which stole through its recesses, for the most part in silence, but occasionally murmuring sullenly against the rocks and large stones, which seemed determined to bar its further progress. In winter, or in the rainy season, this small stream was a foaming torrent of the most formidable magnitude, and it was at such periods that it had torn open and laid bare the broad-faced and huge fragments of rock which, at the season of which we speak, hid its course from the eye, and seemed disposed totally to interrupt its course. "Undoubtedly," thought the clergyman, "this mountain rivulet, suddenly swelled by a water-spout or thunderstorm, has often been the cause of those accidents which, happening in the glen called by her name, have been ascribed to the agency of the Cloght-dearg."

Just as this idea crossed his mind, he heard a female voice exclaim, in a wild and thrilling accent, "Michael Tyrie—Michael Tyrie!" He looked round in astonishment, and not without some fear. It seemed for an instant as if the evil being, whose existence he had disowned, was about to appear for the punishment of his incredulity. This alarm did not hold him more than an instant, nor did it prevent his replying in a firm voice, "Who calls, and where are you?"

"One who journeys in wretchedness, between life and death," answered the voice ; and the speaker, a tall female, appeared from among the fragments of rocks which had concealed her from view.

As she approached more closely, her mantle of bright tartan, in which the red color much predominated, her stature, the long stride with which she advanced, and the writhen features and wild eyes which were visible from under her curch, would have made her no inadequate representative of the spirit which gave name to the valley. But Mr. Tyrie instantly knew her as the Woman of the Tree, the widow of MacTavish Mhor, the now childless mother of Hamish Bean. I am not sure whether the minister would not have endured the visitation of the Cloght-dearg herself, rather than the shock of Elspat's presence, considering her crime and her misery. He drew up his horse instinctively, and stood endeavoring to collect his ideas, while a few paces brought her up to his horse's head.

"Michael Tyrie," said she, "the foolish women of the clachan hold thee as a god; be one to me, and say that my son lives. Say this, and I too will be of thy worship: I will bend my knees on the seventh day in thy house of worship, and thy God shall be my God."

"Unhappy woman," replied the clergyman, "man forms not pactions with his Maker as with a creature of clay like himself. Thinkest thou to chaffer with Him who formed the earth and spread out the heavens, or that thou canst offer aught of homage or devotion that can be worth acceptance in His eyes? He hath asked obedience, not sacrifice; patience under the trials with which he afflicts us, instead of vain bribes, such as man offers to his changeful brother of clay, that he may be moved from his purpose."

"Be silent, priest!" answered the desperate woman: "speak not to me the words of thy white book. Elspat's kindred were of those who crossed themselves, and knelt when the sacring bell was rung; and she knows that atonement can be made on the altar for deeds done in the field. Elspat had once flocks and herds, goats upon the cliffs, and cattle in the strath. She wore gold around her neck and on her hair—thick twists as those worn by the heroes of old. All these would she have resigned to the priest—all these; and if he wished for the ornaments of a gentle lady, or the sporran of a high chief, though they had been great as MacCallan Mhor himself, MacTavish Mhor would have procured them if Elspat had promised them. Elspat is now poor, and has nothing to give. But the Black Abbot of Inchaffray would have bidden her scourge her shoulders and macerate her feet by pilgrimage, and he would have granted his pardon to her when he saw that her blood had flowed,

and that her flesh had been torn. These were the priests who had indeed power even with the most powerful; they threatened the great men of the earth with the word of their mouth, the sentence of their book, the blaze of their torch, the sound of their sacring bell. The mighty bent to their will, and unloosed at the word of the priests those whom they had bound in their wrath, and set at liberty, unharmed, him whom they had sentenced to death, and for whose blood they had thirsted. These were a powerful race, and might well ask the poor to kneel, since their power could humble the proud. But you! against whom are ye strong, but against women who have been guilty of folly and men who never wore sword? The priests of old were like the winter torrent which fills this hollow valley, and rolls these massive rocks against each other as easily as the boy plays with the ball which he casts before him. But you! you do but resemble the summer-stricken stream, which is turned aside by the rushes, and stemmed by a bush of sedges. Woe worth you, for there is no help in you!"

The clergyman was at no loss to conceive that Elspat had lost the Roman Catholic faith without gaining any other, and that she still retained a vague and confused idea of the composition with the priesthood, by confession, alms, and penance, and of their extensive power, which, according to her notion, was adequate, if duly propitiated, even to effecting her son's safety.

Compassionating her situation, and allowing for her errors and ignorance, he answered her with mildness. "Alas, unhappy woman! Would to God I could convince thee as easily where thou oughtest to seek, and art sure to find, consolation as I can assure you with a single word that, were Rome and all her priesthood once more in the plentitude of their power, they could not, for largesse or penance, afford to thy misery an atom of aid or comfort. Elspat MacTavish, I grieve to tell you the news."

"I know them without thy speech," said the unhappy woman. "My son is doomed to die."

"Elspat," resumed the clergyman, "he *was* doomed, and the sentence has been executed."

The hapless mother threw her eyes up to heaven, and uttered a shriek so unlike the voice of a human being, that the eagle which soared in middle air answered it as she would have done the call of her mate.

"It is impossible!" she exclaimed—"it is impossible! Men do not condemn and kill on the same day! Thou art

deceiving me. The people call thee holy, hast thou the heart to tell a mother she has murdered her only child ?"

"God knows," said the priest, the tears falling fast from his eyes, "that, were it in my power, I would gladly tell better tidings. But these which I bear are as certain as they are fatal. My own ears heard the death-shot, my own eyes beheld thy son's death—thy son's funeral. My tongue bears witness to what my ears heard and my eyes saw."

The wretched female clasped her hands close together, and held them up towards heaven like a sibyl announcing war and desolation, while, in impotent yet frightful rage, she poured forth a tide of the deepest imprecations. "Base Saxon churl !" she exclaimed—"vile, hypocritical juggler ! May the eyes that looked tamely on the death of my fair-haired boy be melted in their sockets with ceaseless tears, shed for those that are nearest and most dear to thee ! May the ears that heard his death-knell be dead hereafter to all other sounds save the screech of the raven and the hissing of the adder ! May the tongue that tells me of his death and of my own crime be withered in thy mouth ; or better, when thou wouldst pray with thy people, may the Evil One guide it, and give voice to blasphemies instead of blessings, until men shall fly in terror from thy presence, and the thunder of heaven be launched against thy head, and stop forever thy cursing and accursed voice ! Begone, with this malison ! Elspat will never, never again bestow so many words upon living man."

She kept her word : from that day the world was to her a wilderness, in which she remained without thought, care, or interest, absorbed in her own grief, indifferent to everything else.

With her mode of life, or rather of existence, the reader is already as far acquainted as I have the power of making him. Of her death, I can tell him nothing. It is supposed to have happened several years after she had attracted the attention of my excellent friend Mrs. Bethune Baliol. Her benevolence, which was never satisfied with dropping a sentimental tear when there was room for the operation of effective charity, induced her to make various attempts to alleviate the condition of this most wretched woman. But all her exertions could only render Elspat's means of subsistence less precarious—a circumstance which, though generally interesting even to the most wretched outcasts, seemed to her a matter of total indifference. Every attempt to place any person in her hut to take charge of her mis-

carried, through the extreme resentment with which she regarded all intrusion on her solitude, or by the timidity of those who had been pitched upon to be inmates with the terrible Woman of the Tree. At length, when Elspat became totally unable (in appearance at least) to turn herself on the wretched settle which served her for a couch, the humanity of Mr. Tyrie's successor sent two women to attend upon the last moments of the solitary, which could not, it was judged, be far distant, and to avert the possibility that she might perish for want of assistance or food before she sunk under the effects of extreme age or mortal malady.

It was on a November evening that the two women appointed for this melancholy purpose arrived at the miserable cottage which we have already described. Its wretched inmate lay stretched upon the bed, and seemed almost already a lifeless corpse, save for the wandering of the fierce dark eyes, which rolled in their sockets in a manner terrible to look upon, and seemed to watch with surprise and indignation the motions of the strangers, as persons whose presence was alike unexpected and unwelcome. They were frightened at her looks ; but, assured in each other's company, they kindled a fire, lighted a candle, prepared food, and made other arrangements for the discharge of the duty assigned them.

The assistants agreed they should watch the bedside of the sick person by turns ; but, about midnight, overcome by fatigue, for they had walked far that morning, both of them fell fast asleep. When they awoke, which was not till after the interval of some hours, the hut was empty and the patient gone. They rose in terror, and went to the door of the cottage, which was latched as it had been at night. They looked out into the darkness, and called upon their charge by her name. The night-raven screamed from the old oak-tree, the fox howled on the hill, the hoarse waterfall replied with its echoes ; but there was no human answer. The terrified women did not dare to make further search till morning should appear ; for the sudden disappearance of a crature so frail as Elspat, together with the wild tenor of her history, intimidated them from stirring from the hut. They remained, therefore, in dreadful terror, sometimes thinking they heard her voice without, and at other times, that sounds of a different description were mingled with the mournful sigh of the night-breeze, or the dash of the cascade. Sometimes, too, the latch rattled, as if some frail and impotent hand were in vain attempting to lift it, and ever and anon they expected the entrance of their terrible patient,

animated by supernatural strength, and in the company, perhaps, of some being more dreadful than herself. Morning came at length. They sought brake, rock, and thicket in vain. Two hours after daylight, the minister himself appeared, and, on the report of the watchers, caused the country to be alarmed, and a general and exact search to be made through the whole neighborhood of the cottage and the oak-tree. But it was all in vain. Elspat MacTavish was never found, whether dead or alive; nor could there ever be traced the slightest circumstance to indicate her fate.

The neighborhood was divided concerning the cause of her disappearance. The credulous thought that the evil spirit, under whose influence she seemed to have acted, had carried her away in the body; and there are many who are still unwilling, at untimely hours, to pass the oak-tree, beneath which, as they allege, she may still be seen seated according to her wont. Others less superstitious supposed that, had it been possible to search the gulf of the "corrie dhu," the profound deeps of the lake, or the whelming eddies of the river, the remains of Elspat MacTavish might have been discovered; as nothing was more natural, considering her state of body and mind, than that she should have fallen in by accident, or precipitated herself intentionally into one or other of those places of sure destruction. The clergyman entertained an opinion of his own. He thought that, impatient of the watch which was placed over her, this unhappy woman's instinct had taught her, as it directs various domestic animals, to withdraw herself from the sight of her own race, that the death-struggle might take place in some secret den, where, in all probability, her mortal relics would never meet the eyes of mortal. This species of instinctive feeling seemed to him of a tenor with the whole course of her unhappy life, and most likely to influence her when it drew to a conclusion.

APPENDIX TO INTRODUCTION

TO THE

CHRONICLES OF THE CANONGATE

It has been suggested to the Author, that it might be well to reprint here a detailed account of the public dinner alluded to in the Introduction, as given in the newspapers of the time; and the reader is accordingly presented with the following extract from the *Edinburgh Weekly Journal* for Wednesday 28th February, 1827.

THEATRICAL FUND DINNER

Before proceeding with our acoount of this very interesting festival—for so it may be termed—it is our duty to present to our readers the following letter, which we have received from the president.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *EDINBURGH WEEKLY JOURNAL*

SIR—I am extremely sorry I have not leisure to correct the copy you sent me of what I am stated to have said at the Dinner for the Theatrical Fund. I am no orator, and upon such occasions as are alluded to I say as well as I can what the time requires.

However, I hope your reporter has been more accurate in other instances than in mine. I have corrected one passage, in which I am made to speak with great impropriety and petulance respecting the opinions of those who do not approve of dramatic entertainments. I have restored what I said, which was meant to be respectful, as every objection founded in conscience is, in my opinion, entitled to be so treated. Other errors I left as I found them, it being of little consequence whether I spoke sense or nonsense, in what was merely intended for the purpose of the hour.

I am, sir,
Your obedient servant,
EDNIBURGH, *Monday.* WALTER SCOTT.

The Theatrical Fund Dinner, which took place on Friday in the Assembly Rooms, was conducted with admirable spirit. The Chairman, Sir WALTER SCOTT, among his other great qualifications, is well fitted to enliven such an entertainment. His manners are extremely easy, and his style of speaking simple and natural, yet full of vivacity and point; and he has the art, if it be arts of relaxing into a certain homeliness of manner, without losing one particle of his dignity. He thus takes off some of that solemn formality which belongs to such meetings, and, by his easy and graceful familiarity, imparts to them somewhat of the pleasing character of a private entertainment. Near Sir W. Scott sat the Earl of Fife, Lord Meadowbank, Sir John Hope of Pinkie, Bart., Admiral Adam, Baron Clerk Rattray, Gilbert Innes, Esq., James Walker, Esq., Robert Dundas, Esq., Alexander Smith, Esq.. etc.

The cloth being removed, "Non Nobis Domine" was sung by Messrs. Thorne, Swift, Collier, and Hartley, after which the following toasts were given from the chair:—

"The King"—all the honors.

"The Duke of Clarence and the Royal Family."

The CHAIRMAN, in proposing the next toast, which he wished to be drunk in solemn silence, said it was to the memory of a regretted prince whom we had lately lost. Every individual would at once conjecture to whom he alluded. He had no intention to dwell on his military merits. They had been

told in the senate; they had been repeated in the cottage; and whenever a soldier was the theme, his name was never far distant. But it was chiefly in connection with the business of this meeting, which his late Royal Highness had condescended in a particular manner to patronize, that they were called on to drink his health. To that charity he had often sacrificed his time, and had given up the little leisure which he had from important business. He was always ready to attend on every occasion of this kind, and it was in that view that he proposed to drink to the memory of his late Royal Highness the Duke of York.—Drunk in solemn silence.

The CHAIRMAN then requested that gentlemen would fill a bumper as full as it would hold, while he would say only a few words. He was in the habit of hearing speeches, and he knew the feeling with which long ones were regarded. He was sure that it was perfectly unnecessary for him to enter into any vindication of the dramatic art, which they had come here to support. This, however, he considered to be the proper time and proper occasion for him to say a few words on that love of representation which was an innate feeling in human nature. It was the first amusement that the child had; it grew greater as he grew up; and, even in the decline of life, nothing amused so much as when a common tale is told with appropriate personification. The first thing a child does is to ape his schoolmaster by flogging a chair. The assuming a character ourselves, or the seeing others assume an imaginary character, is an enjoyment natural to humanity. It was implanted in our very nature to take pleasure from such representations, at proper times and on proper occasions. In all ages the theatrical art had kept pace with the improvement of mankind, and with the progress of letters and the fine arts. As man has advanced from the ruder stages of society, the love of dramatic representations has increased, and all works of this nature have been improved in character and in structure. They had only to turn their eyes to the history of ancient Greece, although he did not pretend to very deeply versed in its ancient drama. Its first tragic poet commanded a body of troops at the battle of Marathon. Sophocles and Euripides were men of rank in Athens, when Athens was in its highest renown. They shook Athens with their discourses, as their theatrical works shook the theatre itself. If they turned to France in the time of Louis the Fourteenth, that era which is the classical history of that country, they would find that it was referred to by all Frenchmen as the golden age of the drama there. And also in England, in the time of Queen Elizabeth, the drama was at its highest pitch when the nation began to mingle deeply and wisely in the general politics of Europe, not only not receiving laws from others, but giving laws to the world, and vindicating the rights of mankind. (Cheers.) There have been various times when the dramatic art subsequently fell into disrepute. Its professors have been stigmatized; and laws have been passed against them, less dishonorable to them than to the statesmen by whom they were proposed, and to the legislators by whom they were adopted. What were the times in which these laws were passed? Was it not when virtue was seldom inculcated as a moral duty that we were required to relinquish the most rational of all our amusements, when the clergy were enjoined celibacy, and when the laity were denied the right to read their Bibles? He thought that it must have been from a notion of penance that they erected the drama into an ideal place of profaneness, and spoke of the theater as of the tents of sin. He did not mean to dispute that there were many excellent persons who thought differently from him, and he disclaimed the slightest idea of charging them with bigotry or hypocrisy on that account. He gave them full credit for their tender consciences in making these objections, although they did not appear relevant to him. But to these persons, being, as he believed them, men of worth and piety, he was sure the purpose of this meeting would furnish some apology for an error, if there be any, in the opinions of those who attend. They would approve the gift, although they might differ in other points. Such might not approve of going to the theater, but at least could not deny that they might give away from their superfluity what was required for the relief of the sick, the support of the aged, and the comfort of the afflicted. These were duties enjoined by our religion itself. (Loud cheers.)

The performers are in a particular manner entitled to the support or regard, when in old age or distress, of those who had partaken of the amusements of those places which they render an ornament to society. Their art was of a peculiarly delicate and precarious nature. They had to serve a long apprenticeship. It was very long before even the first-rate geniuses could acquire the mechanical knowledge of the stage business. They must languish long in obscurity before they can avail themselves of their natural talents; and after that they have but a short space of time, during which they are fortunate if they can provide the means of comfort in the decline of life. That comes late, and lasts but a short time; after which they are left dependent. Their limbs fail, their teeth are loosened, their voice is lost, and they are left, after giving

happiness to others, in a most disconsolate state. The public were liberal and generous to those deserving their protection. It was a sad thing to be dependent on the favor, or, he might say, in plain terms, on the caprice, of the public; and this more particularly for a class of persons of whom extreme prudence is not the character. There might be instances of opportunities being neglected; but let each gentleman tax himself, and consider the opportunities *they* had neglected, and the sums of money *they* had wasted; let every gentleman look into his own bosom, and say whether these were circumstances which would soften his own feelings, were he to be plunged into distress. He put it to every generous bosom—to every better feeling—to say what consolation was it to old age to be told that you might have made provision at a time which had been neglected (loud cheers); and to find it objected, that if you had pleased you might have been wealthy. He had hitherto been speaking of what, in theatrical language, was called "stars," but they were sometimes falling ones. There were another class of sufferers naturally and necessarily connected with the theater, without whom it was impossible to go on. The sailors have a saying, "Every man cannot be a boatswain." If there must be a great actor to act Hamlet, there must also be people to act Laertes, the King, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern, otherwise a drama cannot go on. If even Garrick himself were to rise from the dead, he could not act Hamlet alone. There must be generals, colonels, commanding-officers, subalterns. But what are the private soldiers to do? Many have mistaken their own talents, and have been driven in early youth to try the stage, to which they were not competent. He would know what to say to the indifferent poet and to the bad artist. He would say that it was foolish, and he would recommend to the poet to become a scribe, and the artist to paint sign-posts. (Loud laughter.) But you could not send the player adrift, for if he cannot play Hamlet, he must play Guildenstern. Where there are many laborers, wages must be low, and no man in such a situation can decently support a wife and family and save something off his income for old age. What is this man to do in latter life? Are you to cast him off like an old hinge or a piece of useless machinery which has done its work? To a person who had contributed to our amusement this would be unkind, ungrateful, and unchristian. His wants are not of his own making, but arise from the natural sources of sickness and old age. It cannot be denied that there is one class of sufferers to whom no imprudence can be ascribed, except on first entering on the profession. After putting his hand to the dramatic plow he cannot draw back; but must continue at it, and toil, till death release him from want, or charity, by its milder influence, steps in to render that want more tolerable. He had little more to say, except that he sincerely hoped that the collection to-day, from the number of respectable gentlemen present, would meet the views entertained by the patrons. He hoped it would do so. They should not be disheartened. Though they could not do a great deal, they might do something. They had this consolation, that everything they parted with from their superfluity would do some good, They would sleep the better themselves when they have been the means of giving sleep to others. It was ungrateful and unkind that those who had sacrificed their youth to our amusement should not receive the reward due to them, but should be reduced to hard fare in their old age. We cannot think of poor Falstaff going to bed without his cup of sack, or Macbeth fed on bones as marrowless as those of Banquo. (Loud cheers and laughter.) As he believed that they were all as fond of the dramatic art as he was in his younger days, he would propose that they should drink "The Theatrical Fund," with three times three.

Mr. Mackay rose, on behalf of his brethren, to return their thanks for the toast just drunk. Many of the gentlemen present, he said, were perhaps not fully acquainted with the nature and intention of the institution, and it might not be amiss to enter into some explanations on the subject. With whomsoever the idea of a Theatrical Fund might have originated (and it had been disputed by the surviving relatives of two or three individuals,) certain it was that the first legally constituted Theatrical Fund owned its origin to one of the brightest ornaments of the profession, the late David Garrick. That eminent actor conceived that, by a weekly subscription in the theater, a fund might be raised among its members, from which a portion might be given to those of his less fortunate brethren, and thus an opportunity would be offered for prudence to provide what fortune had denied—a comfortable provision for the winter of life. With the welfare of his profession constantly at heart, the zeal with which he labored to uphold its respectability, and to impress upon the minds of his brethren not only the necessity, but the blessing, of independence, the fund became his peculiar care. He drew up a form of laws for its government, procured, at his own expense, the passing of an Act of Parliament for its confirmation, bequeathed to it a handsome legacy, and thus became the father of the Drury Lane Fund. So constant was his attachment to this infant establishment, that he chose to grace the close of the brightest

theatrical life on record by the last display of his transcendent talent on the occasion of a benefit for this child of his adoption, which ever since has gone by the name of the Garrick Fund. In imitation of his noble example, funds had been established in several provincial theatres in England ; but it remained for Mrs. Henry Siddons and Mr. William Murray to become the founders of the first Theatrical Fund in Scotland. (Cheers.) This Fund commenced under the most favorable auspices : it was liberally supported by the management, and highly patronized by the public. Notwithstanding, it fell short in the accomplishment of its intentions. What those intentions were, he (Mr. Mackay) need not recapitulate ; but they failed, and he did not hesitate to confess that a want of energy on the part of the performers was the probable cause. A new set of rules and regulations were lately drawn up, submitted to and approved of at a general meeting of the members of the theater ; and accordingly the fund was remodelled on the 1st of January last. And here he thought he did but echo the feelings of his brethren by publicly acknowledging the obligations they were under to the management for the aid given, and the warm interest they had all along taken in the welfare of the fund. (Cheers.) The nature and object of the profession had been so well treated of by the president, that he would say nothing ; but of the numerous offsprings of science and genius that court precarious fame, the actor boasts the slenderest claim of all : the sport of fortune, the creatures of fashion, and the victims of caprice, they are seen, heard, and admired, but to be forgot. They leave no trace, no memorial of their existence ; they "come like shadows, so depart." (Cheers.) Yet, humble though their pretentions be, there was no profession, trade, or calling where such a combination of requisites, mental and bodily, were indispensable. In all others the principal may practise after he has been visited by the afflicting hand of Providence—some by the loss of limb, some of voice, and many, when the faculty of the mind is on the wane, may be assisted by dutiful children or devoted servants. Not so the actor ; he must retain all he ever did possess, or sink dejected to a mournful home. (Applause.) Yet, while they are toiling for ephemeral theatric fame, how very few ever possess the means of hoarding in their youth that which would give bread in old age ! But now a brighter prospect dawned upon them, and to the success of this their infant establishment they looked with hope, as to a comfortable and peaceful home in their declining years. He concluded by tendering to the meeting, in the name of his brethren and sisters, their unfeigned thanks for their liberal support and begged to propose the health of the patrons of the Ediburgh Theatrical Fund. (Cheers).

Lord MEADOWBANK said, that by desire of his hon. friend in the chair, and of his noble friend at his right hand, he begged leave to return thanks for the honor which had been conferred on the patrons of this excellent institution. He could answer for himself—he could answer for them all—that they were deeply impressed with the meritorious objects which it has in view, and of their anxious wish to promote its interests. For himself, he hoped he might be permitted to say that he was rather surprised at finding his own name as one of the patrons, associated with so many individuals of high rank and powerful influence. But it was an excuse for those who had placed him in a situation so honorable and so distinguished, that when this charity was instituted he happened to hold a high and responsible station under the crown, when he might have been of use in assisting and promoting its objects. His lordship much feared that he could have little expectation, situated as he now was, of doing either ; but he could confidently assert that few things would give him greater gratification than being able to contribute to its prosperity and support ; and, indeed, when one recollects the pleasure which at all periods of life he has received from the exhibitions of the stage, and the exertions of the meritorious individuals for whose aid this fund has been established, he must be divested both of gratitude and feeling who would not give his best endeavors to promote its welfare. And now, that he might in some measure repay the gratification which had been afforded himself, he would beg leave to propose a toast, the health of one of the patrons, a great and distinguished individual, whose name must always stand by itself, and which, in an assembly such as this, or in any other assembly of Scotsmen, can never be received, (not, he would say, with ordinary feelings of pleasure or of delight), but with those of rapture and enthusiasm. In doing so, he felt that hestood in a somewhat new situation. Whoever had been called upon to propose the health of his hon. friend to whom he alluded, some time ago, would have found himself enabled, from the mystery in which certain matters were involved, to gratify himself and his auditors by allusions which found a responding chord in their own feelings, and to deal in the language—the sincere language, of panegyric, without intruding on the modesty of the great individual to whom he referred. But it was no longer possible, consistently with the respect to one's auditors, to use upon this subject terms either of mystification or of obscure or indirect allusion. The clouds have been dispelled, the *darkness visible* has been cleared away, and the Great Unknown—the minstrel of our native land—the mighty magician who

has rolled back the current of time, and conjured up before our living senses the men and the manners of days which have long passed away, stands revealed to the hearts and the eyes of his affectionate and admiring countrymen. If he himself were capable of imagining all that belonged to this mighty subject, were he even able to give utterance to all that as a friend, as a man, and as a Scotsman he must feel regarding it, yet knowing, as he well did, that this illustrious individual was not more distinguished for his towering talents than for those feelings which rendered such allusions ungrateful to himself, however sparingly introduced, he would, on that account, still refrain from doing that which would otherwise be no less pleasing to him than to his audience. But this his lordship hoped he would be allowed to say (his auditors would not pardon him were he to say less), we owe to him, as a people, a large and heavy debt of gratitude. He it is who has opened to foreigners the grand and characterisic beauties of our country. It is to him that we owe that our gallant ancestors and the struggles of our illustrious patriots, who fought and bled in order to obtain and secure that independence and that liberty we now enjoy, have obtained a fame no longer confined to the boundaries of a remote and comparatively obscure nation, and who has called down upon their struggles for glory and freedom the admiration of foreign countries. He it is who has conferred a new reputation on our national character, and bestowed on Scotland an imperishable name, were it only by her having given birth to himself. (Loud and rapturous applause.)

Sir Walter Scott certainly did not think that, in coming here to-day, he would have the task of acknowledging, before 300 gentlemen, a secret which, considering that it was communicated to more than twenty people, had been remarkably well kept. He was now before the bar of his country, and might be understood to be on trial before Lord Meadowbank as an offender; yet he was sure that every impartial jury would bring in a verdict of Not Proven. He did not now think it necessary to enter into the reasons of his long sllence. Perhaps caprice might have a considerable share in it. He had now to say, however, that the merits of these works, if they had any, and their faults, were entirely imputable to himself. (Long and loud cheering.) He was afraid to think on what he had done. "Look on't again I dare not." He had thus far unbosomed himself, and he knew that it would be reported to the public. He meant, then, seriously to state, that when he said he was the author, he was the total and undivided author. With the exception of quotations, there was not a single word that was not derived from himself, or suggested in the course of his reading. The wand was now broken, and the book buried. You will allow me further to say, with Prospero, it is your breath that has filled my sails, and to crave one single toast in the capacity of the author of these novels; and he would dedicate a bumper to the health of one who has represented some of those characters, of which he had endeavored to give the skeleton, with a degree of liveliness which rendered him grateful. He would propose the health of his friend Bailie Nicol Jarvie—(loud applause)—and he was—sure that, when the Author of *Waverley* and *Rob Roy* drinks to Nicol Jarvie, it would be received with that degree of applause to which that gentleman has always been accustomed, and that they would take care that on the present occasion it should be prodigious! (Long and vehement applause.)

Mr. Macay, who here spoke with great humor in the character of Bailie Jarvie. —My conscience! My worthy father the deacon could not have believed that his son could hae had sic a compliment paid to him by the Great Unknown!

Sir Walter Scott.—The Small Known, now, Mr. Bailie.

Mr. Mackay.—He had been long identified with the Bailie, and he was vain of the cognomen which he had now worn for eight years; and he questioned if any of his brethren in the council had given such universal satisfaction. (Loud laughter and applause.) Before he sat down he begged to propose "The Lord Provost and the City of Edinburgh."

Sir Walter Scott apologized for the absence of the Lord Provost, who had gone to London on public business.

Tune—"Within a mile of Edinburgh town."

Sir Walter Scott gave "The Duke of Wellington and the army."

Glee—"How merrily we live."

"Lord Melville and the Navy, that fought till they left nobody to fight with, like an arch sportsman who clears all and goes after the game."

Mr. Pat. Robertson.—They had heard this evening a toast which had been received with intense delight, which will be published in every newspaper, and will be hailed with joy by all Europe. He had one toast assigned him which he had great pleasure in giving. He was sure that the stage had in all ages a great effect on the morals and manners of the people. It was very desirable that the stage should be well regulated; and there was no criterion by which its regulation could be better determined than by the moral character and personal respectability of the performers. He was not one of those stern moralists who objected to the theatre. The most fastidious moralist could not possibly apprehend

any injury from the stage of Edinburgh, as it was presently managed, and so long as it was adorned by that illustrious individual, Mrs. Henry Siddons, whose public exhibitions were not more remarkable for feminine grace and delicacy than was her private character for every virtue which could be admired in domestic life. He would conclude with reciting a few words from Shakspeare, in a spirit not of contradiction to those stern moralists who disliked the theater, but of meekness :—"Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed ? do you hear, let them be well used, for they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the time." He then gave "Mrs. Henry Siddons, and success to the Theater-Royal of Edinburgh."

Mr. Murray.—Gentlemen, I rise to return thanks for the honor you have done Mrs. Siddons, in doing which I am somewhat difficulted, from the extreme delicacy which attends a brother's expatiating upon a sister's claims to honors publicly paid—(hear, hear)—yet, gentlemen, your kindness emboldens me to say, that were I to give utterance to all a brother's feelings, I should not exaggerate those claims. (Loud applause.) I therefore, gentlemen, thank you most cordially for the honor you have done her, and shall now request permission to make an observation on the establishment of the Edinburgh Theatrical Fund. Mr. Mackay has done Mrs. Henry Siddons and myself the honor to ascribe the establishment to us ; but no, gentlemen, it owes its origin to a higher source—the publication of the novel *Rob Roy*—the unprecedented success of the opera adapted from that popular production. (Hear, hear.) It was that success which relieved the Edinburgh Theater from its difficulties and enabled Mrs. Siddons to carry into effect the establishment of a fund she had long desired, but was prevented from effecting, from the unsettled state of her theatrical concerns. I therefore hope that, in future years, when the aged and infirm actor derives relief from this fund, he will, in the language of the gallant Highlander, "Cast his eye to good old Scotland, and not forget Rob Roy." (Loud applause.)

Sir Walter Scott here stated, that Mrs. Siddons wanted the means but not the will of beginning the Theatrical Fund. He here alluded to the great merits of Mr. Murray's management, and to his merits as an actor, which were of the first order, and of which every person who attends the theater must be sensible ; and after alluding to the embarrassments with which the theater had been at one period threatened, he concluded by giving the health of Mr. Murray, which was drunk with three times three.

Mr. Murray.—Gentlemen, I wish I could believe that, in any degree, I merited the compliments with which it has pleased Sir Walter Scott to preface the proposal of my health, or the very flattering manner in which you have done me the honor to receive it. The approbation of such an assembly is most gratifying to me, and might encourage feelings of vanity, were not such feelings crushed by my conviction, that no man holding the situation I have so long held in Edinburgh could have failed, placed in the peculiar circumstances in which I have been placed. Gentlemen, I shall not insult your good taste by eulogiums upon your judgment or kindly feeling ; though to the first I owe any improvement I may have made as an actor, and certainly my success as a manager to the second. (Applause.) When, upon the death of my dear brother, the late Mr. Siddons, it was proposed that I should undertake the management of the Edinburgh Theater, I confess I drew back, doubting my capability to free it from the load of debt and difficulty with which it was surrounded. In this state of anxiety, I solicited the advice of one who had ever honored me with his kindest regard, and whose name no member of my profession can pronounce without feelings of the deepest respect and gratitude—I allude to the late Mr. John Kemble. (Great applause.) To him I applied ; and with the repetition of his advice I shall cease to trespass upon your time—(hear, hear),—"My dear William, fear not ; integrity and assiduity must prove an overmatch for all difficulty ; and though I approve your not indulging a vain confidence in your own ability, and viewing with respectful apprehension the judgment of the audience you have to act before, yet be assured that judgment will ever be tempered by the feeling that you are acting for the widow and the fatherless." (Loud applause.) Gentlemen, those words have never passed from my mind ; and I feel convinced that you have pardoned my many errors from the feeling that I was striving for the widow and the fatherless. (Long and enthusiastic applause followed Mr. Murray's address.)

Sir Walter Scott gave the health of the Stewards.

Mr. Vandenhoff.—Mr. President and gentlemen, the honor conferred upon the Stewards, in the very flattering compliment you have just paid us, calls forth our warmest acknowledgments. In tendering you our thanks for the approbation you have been pleased to express of our humble exertions, I would beg leave to advert to the cause in which we have been engaged. Yet, surrounded as I am by the genius, the eloquence of this enlightened city, I cannot but feel the presumption which ventures to address you on so interesting a subject. Accustomed to speak in the language of others, I feel quite at a loss for terms wherein to clothe the sentiments excited by the present occasion. (Applause.) The nature

of the institution which has sought your fostering patronage, and the objects which it contemplates, have been fully explained to you. But, gentlemen, the relief which it proposes is not a gratuitous relief, but to be purchased by the individual contribution of its members towards the general good. This fund lends no encouragement to idleness or improvidence; but it offers an opportunity to prudence, in vigor and youth, to make provision against the evening of life and its attendant infirmity. A period is fixed, at which we admit the plea of age as an exemption from professional labor. It is painful to behold the veteran on the stage (compelled by necessity) contending against physical decay, mocking the joyousness of mirth with the feebleness of age, when the energies decline, when the memory fails, and "the big manly voice, turning again towards childish treble, pipes and whistles in the sound." We would remove him from the mimic scene, where fiction constitutes the charm; we would not view old age caricaturing itself. (Applause.) But as our means may be found, in time of need, inadequate to the fulfilment of our wishes—fearful of raising expectations which we may be unable to gratify—desirous not "to keep the word of promise to the ear and break it to the hope"—we have presumed to court the assistance of the friends of the drama to strengthen our infant institution. Our appeal has been successful beyond our most sanguine expectations. The distinguished patronage conferred on us by your presence on this occasion, and the substantial support which your benevolence has so liberally afforded to our institution, must impress every member of the fund with the most grateful sentiments—sentiments which no language can express, no time obliterate. (Applause.) I will not trespass longer on your attention. I would the task of acknowledging our obligation had fallen into abler hands. (Hear, hear.) In the name of the Stewards, I most respectfully and cordially thank you for the honor you have done us, which greatly overpays our poor endeavors. (Applause.)

This speech, though rather inadequately reported, was one of the best delivered on this occasion. That it was creditable to Mr. Vandenhoff's taste and feelings, the preceding sketch will show; but how much it was so, it does *not* show.

Mr. J. Cay gave "Professor Wilson and the University of Edinburgh, of which he was one of the brightest ornaments."

Lord Meadowbank, after a suitable eulogium, gave "The Earl of Fife," which was drunk with three times three.

Earl Fife expressed his high gratification at the honor conferred on him. He intimated his approbation of the institution, and his readiness to promote its success by every means in his power. He concluded with giving "The health of the Company of Edinburgh."

Mr. Jones, on rising to return thanks, being received with considerable applause, said he was truly grateful for the kind encouragement he had experienced, but the novelty of the situation in which he now was renewed all the feelings he experienced when he first saw himself announced in the bills as a young gentleman, being his first appearance on any stage. (Laughter and applause). Although in the presence of those whose indulgence had, in another sphere, so often shielded him from the penalties of inability, he was unable to execute the task which had so unexpectedly devolved upon him in behalf of his brethren and himself. He therefore begged the company to imagine all that grateful hearts could prompt the most eloquent to utter, and that would be a copy of their feelings. (Applause.) He begged to trespass another moment on their attention, for the purpose of expressing the thanks of the members of the fund to the gentlemen of the Edinburgh Professional Society of Musicians, who, finding that this meeting was appointed to take place on the same evening with their concert, had in the handsomest manner agreed to postpone it. Although it was his duty thus to preface the toast he had to propose, he was certain the meeting required no farther inducement than the recollection of the pleasure the exertions of those gentlemen had often afforded them within those walls, to join heartily in drinking "Health and prosperity to the Edinburgh Professional Society of Musicians." (Applause.)

Mr. Pat. Robertson proposed "The health of Mr. Jeffrey," whose absence was owing to indisposition. The public was well aware that he was the most distinguished advocate at the bar; he was likewise distinguished for the kindness, frankness, and cordial manner in which he communicated with the junior members of the profession, to the esteem of whom his splendid talents would always entitle him.

Mr. J. Maconochie gave "The health of Mrs. Siddons, senior—the most distinguished ornament of the stage."

Sir W. Scott said, that if anything could reconcile him to old age, it was the reflection that he had seen the rising as well as the setting sun of Mrs. Siddons. He remembered well their breakfasting near to the theater, waiting the whole day, the crushing at the doors at six o'clock, and their going in and counting their fingers till seven o'clock. But the very first step, the very first word which she uttered, was sufficient to overpay him for all his labors. The house

was literally electrified ; and it was only from witnessing the effects of her genius that he could guess to what a pitch theatrical excellence could be carried. Those young gentlemen who have only seen the setting sun of this distinguished performer, beautiful and serene as that was, must give us old fellows, who have seen its rise and its meridian, leave to hold our heads a little higher.

Mr. DUNDAS gave "The memory of Home, the author of *Douglas*."

Mr. MACKAY here announced that the subscription for the night amounted to £280 ; and he expressed gratitude for this substantial proof of their kindness.

We are happy to state that subscriptions have since flowed in very liberally.

Mr. MACKAY here entertained the company with a pathetic song.

Sir WALTER SCOTT apologized for having so long forgotten their native land. He would now give "Scotland, the land of Cakes." He would give every river, every loch, every hill, from Tweed to Johnnie Groat's house ; every lass in her cottage and countess in her castle ; and may her sons stand by her, as their fathers did before them, and he who would not drink a bumper to his toast, may he never drink whisky more !

Sir WALTER SCOTT here gave "Lord Meadowbank," who returned thanks.

Mr. H. G. BELL said, that he should not have ventured to intrude himself upon the attention of the assembly, did he not feel confident that the toast he begged to have the honor to propose would make amends of the very imperfect manner in which he might express his sentiments regarding it. It had been said that, notwithstanding the mental supremacy of the present age, notwithstanding that the page of our history was studded with names destined also for the page of immortality—that the genius of Shakspeare was extinct, and the fountain of his inspiration dried up. It might be that these observations were unfortunately correct, or it might be that we were bewildered with a name, not disappointed of the reality ; for though Shakspeare had brought a Hamlet, an Othello, and a Macbeth, an Ariel, a Juliet, and a Rosalind upon the stage, were there not authors living who had brought as varied, as exquisitely painted, and as undying a range of characters into our hearts ? The shape of the mere mould into which genius poured its golden treasures was surely a matter of little moment—let it be called a tragedy, a comedy, or a Waverley novel. But, even among the dramatic authors of the present day, he was unwilling to allow that there was a great and palpable decline from the glory of preceding ages, and his toast alone would bear him out in denying the truth of the proposition. After eulogizing the names of Bailie, Byron, Coleridge, Maturin, and others, he begged to have the honor of proposing the health of James Sheridan Knowles.

Sir WALTER SCOTT.—Gentlemen, I crave a bumper all over. The last toast reminds me of a neglect of duty. Unaccustomed to a public duty of this kind, errors in conducting the ceremonial of it may be excused and omissions pardoned. Perhaps I have made one or two omissions in the course of the evening, for which I trust you will grant me your pardon and indulgence. One thing in particular I have omitted, and I would now wish to make amends for it, by a libation of reverence and respect to the memory of SHAKSPEARE. He was a man of universal genius, and from a period soon after his own era to the present day he has been universally idolized. When I come to his honored name, I am like the sick man who hung up his crutches at the shrine, and was obliged to confess that he did not walk better than before. It is indeed difficult, gentlemen, to compare him to any other individual. The only one to whom I can at all compare him is the wonderful Arabian dervise, who dived into the body of each, and in this way became familiar with the thoughts and secrets of their hearts. He was a man of obscure origin, and, as a player, limited in his acquirements, but he was born evidently with a universal genius. His eyes glanced at all the varied aspects of life, and his fancy portrayed with equal talents the king on the throne and the clown who crackles his chestnuts at a Christmas fire. Whatever note he takes, he strikes it just and true, and awakens a corresponding chord in our own bosoms. Gentlemen, I propose "The memory of William Shakspeare."

Glee—"Lightly tread, 'tis hallowed ground."

After the glee, Sir Walter rose, and begged to propose as a toast the health of a lady whose living merit is not a little honorable to Scotland. The toast (said he) is also flattering to the national vanity of a Scotchman, as the lady whom I intend to propose is a native of this country. From the public her works have met with the most favorable reception. One piece of hers, in particular, was often acted here of late years, and gave pleasure of no mean kind to many brilliant and fashionable audiences. In her private character she (he begged leave to say) is as remarkable as in a public sense she is for her genius. In short, he would in one word name—"Joanna Baillie."

This health being drunk, Mr. Thorne was called on for a song, and sung, with great taste and feeling, "The Anchor's weighed."

W. MENZIES, Esq. advocate, rose to propose the health of a gentleman for many years connected at intervals with the dramatic art in Scotland. Whether we look at the range of characters he performs or at the capacity which he evinces

in executing those which he undertakes, he is equally to be admired. In all his parts he is unrivalled. The individual to whom he alluded is (said he) well known to the gentlemen present, in the characters of Malvolio, Lord Ogleby, and the Green Man; and, in addition to his other qualities, he merits, for his perfection in these characters, the grateful sense of this meeting. He would wish, in the first place, to drink his health as an actor; but he was not less estimable in domestic life, and as a private gentleman; and when he announced him as one whom the Chairman had honored with his friendship, he was sure that all present would cordially join him in drinking "The health of Mr. Terry."

Mr. William Allen, banker, said, that he did not rise with the intention of making a speech. He merely wished to contribute in a few words to the mirth of the evening—an evening which certainly had not passed off without some blunders. It had been understood—at least he had learned or supposed, from the expressions of Mr. Pritchard—that it would be sufficient to put a paper, with the name of the contributor, into the box, and that the gentleman thus contributing would be called on for the money next morning. He, for his part, had committed a blunder, but it might serve as a caution to those who may be present at the dinner of next year. He had merely put in his name, written on a slip of paper, without the money. But he would recommend that, as some of the gentlemen might be in the same situation, the box should be again sent round, and he was confident that they, as well as he, would redeem their error.

Sir Walter Scott said, that the meeting was somewhat in the situation of Mrs. Anne Page, who had £300 and possibilities. We have already got (said he) £280, but I should like, I confess, to have the £300. He would gratify himself by proposing the health of an honorable person, the Lord Chief Baron, whom England has sent to us, and connecting with it that of his "yokefellow on the bench," as Shakspeare says, Mr. Baron Clerk—"The Court of Exchequer."

Mr. Baron Clark regretted the absence of his learned brother. None, he was sure, could be more generous in his nature, or more ready to help a Scottish purpose.

Sir Walter Scott.—There is one who ought to be remembered on this occasion. He is, indeed, well entitled to our grateful recollection—one, in short, to whom the drama in this city owes much. He succeeded, not without trouble, and perhaps at some considerable sacrifice, in establishing a theater. The younger part of the company may not recollect the theater to which I allude; but there are some who with me may remember by name a place called Carrubber's Close. There Allan Ramsay established his little theater. His own pastoral was not fit for the stage, but it has its admirers in those who love the Doric language in which it is written; and it is not without merits of a very peculiar kind. But, laying aside all considerations of his literary merit, Allan was a good, jovial, honest fellow, who could crack a bottle with the best. "The memory of Allan Ramsay."

Mr. Murray, on being requested, sung, "'Twas merry in the hall," and at the conclusion was greeted with repeated rounds of applause.

Mr. Jones.—One omission I conceive has been made. The cause of the fund has been ably advocated, but it is still susceptible, in my opinion, of an additional charm—

> Without the smile from partial beauty won,
> Oh, what were man?—a world without a sun!

And there would not be a darker spot in poetry than would be the corner in Shakespeare Square if, like its fellow, the Register Office, the theater were deserted by the ladies. They are, in fact, our most attractive stars. "The Patronesses of the theater—the ladies of the city of Edinburgh." This toast I ask leave to drink with all the honors which conviviality can confer.

Mr. Patrick Robertson would be the last man willingly to introduce any topic calculated to interrupt the harmony of the evening; yet he felt himself treading upon ticklish ground when he approached the region of the Nor' Loch. He assured the company, however, that he was not about to enter on the subject of the improvement bill. They all knew, that if the public were unanimous—if the consent of all parties were obtained—if the rights and interests of everybody were therein attended to, saved, reserved, respected, and excepted—if everybody agreed to it—and finally, a most essential point, if nobody opposed it—then, and in that case, and provided also that due intimation were given—the bill in question might pass—would pass, or might, could, would, or should pass—all expenses being defrayed. (Laughter.) He was the advocate of neither champion, and would neither avail himself of the absence of the Right Hon. the Lord Provost nor take advantage of the non-appearance of his friend, Mr. Cockburn. (Laughter.) But, in the midst of these civic broils, there had been elicited a ray of hope, that, at some future period, in Bereford Park, or some other place, if all parties were consulted and satisfied, and if intimation were duly made at the kirk doors of all the parishes in Scotland, in terms of the statute in that be-

half provided, the people of Edinburgh might by possibility get a new theatre. (Cheers and laughter.) But wherever the belligerent powers might be pleased to set down this new theatre, he was sure they all hoped to meet the Old Company in it. He should therefore propose, "Better accommodation to the Old Company in the new theatre, site unknown." Mr. Robertson's speech was most humorously given, and he sat down amidst loud cheers and laughter.

Sir WALTER SCOTT.—Wherever the new theater is built, I hope it will not be large. There are two errors which we commonly commit—the one arising from our pride, the other from our poverty. If there are twelve plans, it is odds but the largest, without any regard to comfort, or an eye to the probable expense, is adopted. There was the College projected on this scale, and undertaken in the same manner, and who shall see the end of it? It has been building all my life, and may probably last during the lives of my children, and my children's children. Let not the same prophetic hymn be sung, when we commence a new theater, which was performed on the occasion of laying the foundation-stone of a certain edifice, "Behold the endless work begun." Play-going folks should attend somewhat to convenience. The new theater should, in the first place, be such as may be finished in eighteen months or two years; and, in the second place, it should be one in which we can hear our old friends with comfort. It is better that a moderate-sized house should be crowded now and then than to have a large theater with benches continually empty, to the discouragement of the actors and the discomfort of the spectators. (Applause.) He then commented in flattering terms on the genius of Mackenzie and his private worth, and concluded by proposing "The health of Henry Mackenzie, Esq."

Immediately afterwards he said: Gentlemen, it is now wearing late, and I shall request permission to retire. Like Partridge I may say, "*non sum qualis eram*." At my time of day, I can agree with Lord Ogleby as to his rheumatism, and say, "There's a twinge." I hope, therefore, you will excuse me for leaving the chair.

The worthy baronet then retired amidst long, loud, and rapturous cheering.

Mr. PATRICK ROBERTSON was then called to the chair by common acclamation.

Gentlemen, said Mr. ROBERTSON, I take the liberty of asking you to fill a bumper to the very brim. There is not one of us who will not remember, while he lives, being present at this day's festival, and the declaration made this night by the gentleman who has just left the chair. That declaration has rent the veil from the features of the Great Unknown—a name which must now merge in the name of the Great Known. It will be henceforth coupled with the name of SCOTT, which will become familiar like a household word. We have heard the confession from his own immortal lips (cheering), and we cannot dwell with too much, or too fervent, praise on the merits of the greatest man whom Scotland has produced.

After which, several other toasts were given, and Mr. Robertson left the room about half-past eleven. A few choice spirits, however, rallied round Captain Broadhead of the 7th Hussars, who was called to the chair, and the festivity was prolonged till an early hour on Saturday morning.

The band of the theater occupied the gallery, and that of the 7th Hussars the end of the room, opposite the chair, whose performances were greatly admired. It is but justice to Mr. Gibb to state, that the dinner was very handsome, though slowly served in, and the wines good. The attention of the stewards was exemplary. Mr. Murray and Mr. Vandenhoff, with great good taste, attended on Sir Walter Scott's right and left, and we know that he has expressed himself much gratified by their anxious politeness and sedulity.

NOTES

Note 1—Taunt of Effeminacy, p. 7

It is said in Highland tradition that one of the Macdonalds of the Isles, who had suffered his broadsword to remain sheathed for some months after his marriage with a beautiful woman, was stirred to a sudden and furious expedition against the mainland by hearing conversation to the same purpose [as in the text] among his body-guard.

Note 1.—Welsh Houses, p. 8

The Welsh houses, like those of the cognate tribes in Ireland and in the Highlands of Scotland, were very imperfectly supplied with chimneys. Hence, in the *History of the Gwydir Family*, the striking expression of a Welsh chieftain, who, the house being assaulted and set on fire by his enemies, exhorted his friends to stand to their defence, saying, he had seen as much smoke in the hall upon a Christmas even.

Note 3.—Eudorchawg, p. 8

These were the distinguished marks of rank and valor among the numerous tribes of Celtic extraction. Manlius, the Roman Champion, gained the name of Torquatus, or He of the Chain, on account of an ornament of this kind, won in single combat from a gigantic Gaul. Aneurin, the Welsh bard, mentions, in his poem on the battle of Cattreath, that no less than three hundred of the British who fell there had their necks wreathed with the eudorchawg. This seems to infer that the chain was a badge of distinction, and valor perhaps, but not of royalty ; otherwise there would scarce have been so many kings present in one battle. This chain has been found accordingly in Ireland and Wales, and sometimes, though more rarely, in Scotland. Doubtless it was of too precious materials not to be usually converted into money by the enemy into whose hands it fell.

Note 4.—Foot-pages, p. 9

See *Madoc* [Part I. I] for this literal foot-page's office and duties. Mr. Southey's notes inform us : "The foot-bearer shall hold the feet of the king in his lap, from the time when he reclines at the board till he goes to rest, and he shall chafe them with a towel ; and during all that time he shall watch that no hurt shall happen to the king. He shall eat of the same dish from which the king takes his food . . . he shall light the first candle before the king at his meal." Such are the instructions given for this part of royal ceremonial in the laws of Howell Dha. It may be added, that probably upon this Celtic custom was founded one of those absurd and incredible representations which were propagated at the time of the French Revolution, to stir up the peasants against their feudal superiors. It was pretended that some feudal seigneurs asserted their right to kill and disembowel a peasant, in order to put their own feet within the expiring body, and so recover them from the chill.

Note 5.—Courage of the Welsh, p. 34

This is by no means exaggerated in the text. A very honorable testimony was given to their valor by King Henry I. in a letter to the Greek Emperor, Emanuel Comnenus. This prince having desired that an account might be sent him of all that was remarkable in the island of Great Britain, Henry, in answer to that request, was pleased to take notice, among other particulars, of the extraordinary courage and fierceness of the Welsh, who were not afraid to fight unarmed with enemies armed at all points, valiantly shedding their blood in the cause of their country, and purchasing glory at the expense of their lives.

Note 6.—Selling Meat by Measure, p. 55

Old Henry Jenkins, in his recollections of the abbacies before their dissolution has preserved the fact that roast-beef was delivered out to the guests not by weight, but by measure.

Note 7.—Welsh Bowmen. p.65

The Welsh were excellent bowmen ; but, under favor of Lord Lyttleton, they probably did not use the long-bow, the formidable weapon of the Normans, and afterwards of the English yeomen. That of the Welsh most likely rather resembled the bow of the cognate Celtic tribes of Ireland and of the Highlands of Scotland. It was shorter than the Norman long-bow, as being drawn to the breast, not to the ear, more loosely strung, and the arrow having a heavy iron head ; altogether, in short, a less effective weapon. It appears from the following anecdote that there was a difference between the Welsh arrows and those of the English.

In 1122 [1121], Henry I., marching into Powys Land to chastise Meredyth up Blethyn and certain rebels, in passing a defile was struck by an arrow on the breast. Repelled by the excellence of his breastplate, the shaft fell to the ground. When the King felt the blow and saw the shaft, he swore his usual oath, by the death of our Lord, that the arrow came not from a Welsh, but an English bow ; and, influenced by this belief, hastily put an end to the war.

Note 8.—Rattle of Armor, p. 75

Even the sharp and angry clang made by the iron scabbards of modern cavalry ringing against the steel-tipped saddles and stirrup betrays their approach from a distance. The clash of the armor of knights, armed *cap-à-pie,* must have been much more easily discernible.

Note 9.—Cruelties of the Welsh, p. 87

The Welsh, a fierce and barbarous people, were often accused of mangling the bodies of their slain antagonists. Every one must remember Shakespeare's account, how

> The noble Mortimer,
> Leading the men of Herefordshire to fight
> Against the irregular and wild Glendower,
> Was, by the rude hands of that Welshman, taken,
> And a thousand of his people butcher'd ;
> Upon whose dead corpse there was such misuse,
> Such beastly shameless transformation,
> By those Welshwomen done, as may not be,
> Without much shame, retold or spoken of.

Note 10.—Bahr-geist, p. 126

The idea of the bahr-geist was taken from a passage in the *Memoirs* [pp. 83–86, 1829] of Lady Fanshaw, which have since been given to the public, and received with deserved approbation.

The original runs as follows. Lady Fanshaw, shifting among her friends in Ireland, like other sound loyalists of the period, tells her story thus :—

From hence we went to the Lady Honor O'Brien's, a lady that went for a maid, but few believed it. She was the youngest daughter of the Earl of Thomond. There we stayed three nights—the first of which I was surprised by being laid in a chamber, when about one o'clock, I heard a voice that wakened me. I drew the curtain, and in the casement of the window, I saw, by the light of the moon, a woman leaning through the casement into the window, in white, with red hair and pale and ghastly complexion. She spoke loud, and in a tone I had never heard, thrice, " A horse " ; and then, with a sigh more like the wind than breath, she vanished, and to me her body looked more like a thick cloud than substance. I was so much frightened that my hair stood on end, and my night-clothes fell off. I pulled and pinched your father, who never woke during the disorder I was in, but at last was much surprised to see me in this fright, and more so when I related the story and showed him the window opened. Neither of us slept any more that night ; but he entertained me with telling me how much

more these apparitions were usual in this country than in England; and we concluded the cause to be the great superstition of the Irish, and the want of that knowing faith which should defend them from the power of the devil, which he exercises among them very much. About five o'clock the lady of the house came to see us, saying she had not been in bed all night, because a cousin O'Brien of hers, whose ancestors had owned that house, had desired her to stay with him in his chamber, and that he died at two o'clock; and she said, "I wish you to have had no disturbance, for 'tis the custom of the place that, when any of the family are dying, the shape of a woman appears every night in the window till they be dead. This woman was many ages ago got with child by the owner of this place, who murdered her in his garden, and flung her into the river under the window; but truly I thought not of it when I lodged you here, it being the best room in the house." We made little reply to her speech, but disposed ourselves to be gone suddenly.

Note 11.—Knight's Pennon, p. 246

The pennon of a knight was, in shape, a long streamer, and forked like a swallow's tail; the banner of a banneret was square, and was formed into the other by cutting the ends from the pennon. It was thus the ceremony was performed on the pennon of John Chandos, by the Black Prince, before the battle of Najara.

Note 12.—Sensibility to Pain, p. 276

Such an expression is said to have been used by Mandrin, the celebrated smuggler, while in the act of being broken upon the wheel. This dreadful punishment consists in the executioner, with a bar of iron, breaking the shoulder-bones, arms, thigh-bones, and legs of the criminal, taking his alternate sides. The punishment is concluded by a blow across the breast, called the *coup de grace*, because it removes the sufferer from his agony. When Mandrin received the second blow over the left shoulder-bone, he laughed. His confessor inquired the reason of demeanor so unbecoming his situation. "I only laugh at my own folly, my father," answered Mandrin, "who could suppose that sensibility of pain should continue after the nervous system had been completely deranged by the first blow."

Note 13.—Keiths of Craig, p. 324

The Keiths of Craig, in Kincardineshire, descended from John Keith, fourth son of William, second Earl Marischal, who got from his father, about 1480, the lands of Craig, and part of Garvock, in that country. In Douglas's *Baronage*, 443 to 445, is a pedigree of that family. Colonel Robert Keith of Craig (the seventh in descent from John), by his wife, Agnes, daughter of Robert Murray of Murrayshall, of the family of Blackbarony, widow of Colonel Stirling, of the family of Keir, had one son, viz. Robert Keith of Craig, ambassador to the court of Vienna, afterwards to St. Petersburgh—which latter situation he held at the accession of King George III.—who died at Edinburgh in 1774. He married Margaret, second daughter of Sir William Cunningham of Caprington, by Janet, only child and heiress of Sir James Dick of Prestonfield; and, among other children of this marriage, were the well-known diplomatist, Sir Robert Murray Keith, K. B., a general in the army, and for some time ambassador at Vienna; Sir Basil Keith, Knight, captain in the navy, who died governor of Jamaica; and my excellent friend, Anne Murray Keith, who ultimately came into possession of the family estates and died not long before the date of the Introduction (1831).

Note 14.—Sanctuary of Holyrood, p. 326

The reader may be gratified with Hector Boece's narrative of the original foundation of the famous abbey of Holyrood, or the Holy Cross, as given in Bellenden's translation:—

Etfir deith of Alexander the First, his brothir David come out of Ingland, and wes crounit at Scone, the yeir of God MCXXIV yeiris, and did gret justice, eftir his coronation, in all partis of his realme. He had na weris during the time of King Hary, and wes sa pietuous, that he sat daylie in jugement, to caus his pure comonis to have justice; and causit the actionis of his noblis to be decidit be his othir jugis. He gart ilk juge redres the skaithis that come to the party be his wrang sentence; throw quhilk, he decorit his realm with mony nobil actis, and ejeckit the vennomus custome of riotus cheir, quhilk wes inducit afore be

Inglismen, quhen thai com with Quene Margaret; for the samin wes noisum to al gud maneris, makand his pepil tender and effeminat.

In the fourt yeir of his regne, this nobill prince come to visie the madin Castell of Edinburgh. At this time, all the boundis of Scotland wer ful of woddis, lesouris, and medois; for the countre wes more gevin to store of bestiall than ony productioun of cornis; and about this castell was ane gret forest, full of haris, hindis, toddis, and siclike maner of beistis. Now was the Rude Day cumin, callit the exaltation of the croce; and, becaus the samin wes ane hie solempne day, the king past to his contemplation. Eftir that the messis wer done with maist solempnite and reverence, comperit afore him mony young and insolent baronis of Scotland, richt desirus to haif sum pleseir and solace, be chace of hundis in the said forest. At this time wes with the king ane man of singulare and devoit life, namit Alkwine, channon eftir the ordour of Sanct Augustine, quhilk wes lang time confessoure, afore, to King David in Ingland, the time that he wes Erle of Huntingtoun and Northumbirland. This religious man dissuadit the king, be mony reasonis, to pas to this huntis; and allegit the day wes so solempne, be reverence of the haly croce, that he suld gif him erar, for that day, to contemplation than ony othir exercition. Nochtheles, his dissuasionis litill avalit; for the king wes finalie so provokit, be inoportune solicitatioun of his baronis, that he past, nochtwithstanding the solempnite of this day, to his hountis. At last, quhen he wes cumin throw the vail that lyis to the gret eist fra the said castell, quhare now lyis the Cannongait, the staill past throw the wod with sic noyis and din of rachis and bugillis, that all the bestis were rasit fra thair dennis. Now wes the king cumin to the fute of the crag, and all his noblis severit, heir and thair, fra him at thair game and solace; quhen suddanlie apperit to his sicht the farist hart that evir wes sene afore with levand creatour. The noyis and din of this hart rinnand, as apperit, with auful and braid tindis, maid the kingis hors so effrayit, that na renyeis micht hald him; bot ran, perforce, ouir mire and mossis, away with the king. Nochtheles, the hart followit so fast, that he dang baith the king and his hors to the ground. Than the king kest abak his handis betuix the tindis of this hart, to haif savit him fra the strak thairof; and the haly croce slaid, incontinent, in his handis. The hart fled away with great violence, and evanist in the same place quhare now springis the Rude Well. The pepyll, richt affrayitly, returnit to him out of all partis of the wod, to comfort him efter his trubill, and fell on kneis, devotly adoring the haly croce; for it was not cumin but sum hevinly providence, as weill apperis, for thair is na man can schaw of quhat mater it is of, metal or tre. Sone eftir, the king returnit to his castel; and in the nicht following, he was admonist, be ane vision in his sleip, to big ane abbay of channonis regular in the same place quhare he gat the croce. Als sone as he was awalkinnit, he schew his vision to Alkwine, his confessour; and he na thing suspendit his gud mind, bot erar inflammit him with maist fervent devotion thairto. The king, incontinent, send his traist servandis in France and Flanderis, and brocht richt crafty masonis to big this abbay; syne dedicat it in the honour of this haly croce. The croce remanit continewally in the said abbay, to the time of King David Bruce; quhilk was unhappely tane with it at Durame, quhare it is haldin yit in gret veneration,—Boece, Book XII. ch. xvi.

It is by no means clear what Scottish prince first built a palace, properly so called, in the precincts of this renowned seat of sanctity. The abbey, endowed by successive sovereigns and many powerful nobles with munificent gifts of lands and tithes, came, in process of time, to be one of the most important of the ecclesiastical corporations of Scotland; and as early as the days of Robert Bruce parliaments were held occasionally within its buildings. We have evidence that James IV. had a royal lodging adjoining to the cloister; but it is generally agreed that the first considerable edifice for the accommodation of the royal family erected here was that of James V., *anno* 1525, great part of which still remains, and forms the northwestern side of the existing palace. The more modern buildings which complete the quadrangle were erected by King Charles II. The name of the old conventual church was used as the parish church of the Canongate from the period of the Reformation, until James II. claimed it for his chapel royal, and had it fitted up accordingly in a style of splendor which grievously outraged the feelings of his Presbyterian subjects. The roof of this fragment of a once magnificent church fell in in the year 1768, and it has remained ever since in a state of desolation. For fuller particulars, see the *Provincial Antiquities of Scotland* [by Sir W. Scott, *Miscellaneous Prose Works*, 1834, vol. vii]., or the *History of Holyroodhouse* [1829], by Mr. Charles Mackie.

The greater part of this ancient palace is now [1831], again occupied by his Majesty Charles the Tenth of France, and the rest of that illustrious family, which, in former ages so closely connected by marriage and alliance with the house of Stuart, seems to have been destined to run a similar career of misfortune. *Requiescant in pace!*

Note 15.—Bannatyne Club, p. 338

This club of which the Author of *Waverley* has the honor to be president, was instituted in February, 1823, for the purpose of printing and publishing works illustrative of the history, literature, and antiquities of Scotland. It continues to prosper, and has already rescued from oblivion many curious materials of Scottish history.—The club was dissolved in 1861. See the volume of *Adversaria* presented in 1867 to the members by Mr. Laing, the secretary (*Laing*).

Note 16.—Sommerville Family, p. 338

The ancient Norman family of the Sommervilles came into this island with William the Conqueror, and established one branch in Gloucestershire, another in Scotland. After the lapse of seven hundred years, the remaining possessions of these two branches were united in the person of the late Lord Sommerville, on the death of his English kinsman, the well-known author of *The Chase*.

Note 17.—Lines from Horace, p. 349

Horace, *Sat.*, bk. ii. 2. The meaning will be best conveyed to the English reader in Pope's imitation :—

What's property, dear Swift ? you see it alter
From you to me, from me to Peter Walter,
Or in a mortgage prove a lawyer's share,
Or in a jointure vanish from the heir.

. . . . .

Shades, that to Bacon could retreat afford,
Become the portion of a booby lord ;
And Helmsley, once proud Buckingham's delight,
Slides to a scrivener or to a city knight.
Let lands and houses have what lords they will.
Let us be fix'd, and our own masters still.

Note 18.—Steele, the Covenanter, p. 352

The following extract from Swift's *Life of Creichton* gives the particulars of the bloody scene alluded to in the text :—

Having drank hard one night, I [Creichton] dreamed that I had found Captain David Steele, a notorious rebel, in one of the five farmers' houses on a mountain in the shire of Clydesdale, and parish of Lismahago, within eight miles of Hamilton, a place that I was well acquainted with. This man was head of the rebels since the affair of Airs Moss, having succeeded to Hackston, who had been taken, and afterward hanged, as the reader has already heard ; for. as to Robert Hamilton, who was their commander-in-chief at Bothwell Bridge, he appeared no more among them, but fled, as it was believed, to Holland.

Steele, and his father before him, held a farm in the estate of Hamilton, within two or three miles of that town. When he betook himself to arms, the farm lay waste, and the Duke could find no other person who would venture to take it; whereupon his Grace sent several messages to Steele, to know the reason why he kept the farm waste. The Duke received no other answer than that he would keep it waste, in spite of him and the king too ; whereupon his Grace, at whose table I had always the honor to be a welcome guest, desired I would use my endeavors to destroy that rogue, and I would oblige him for ever.

. . . . . .

To return to my story. When I awaked out of my dream, as I had done before in the affair of Wilson (and I desire the same apology I made in the introduction to these *Memoirs* may serve for both,) I presently rose, and ordered thirty-six dragoons to be at the place appointed by break of day. When we arrived thither, I sent a party to each of the five farmers' houses. This villain Steele had murdered above forty of the king's subjects in cold blood, and, as I was informed, had often laid snares to entrap me ; but it happened that. although he usually kept a gang to attend him, yet at this time he had none, when he stood in the greatest need. One of the party found him in one of the farmers' houses, just as I happened to dream. The dragoons first searched all the rooms below without success, till two of them, hearing somebody stirring over their heads, went up a pair of turnpike stairs. Steele had put on his clothes while the search was

making below; the chamber where he lay was called the Chamber of Deese,* which is the name given to a room where the laird lies, when he comes to a tenant's house. Steele, suddenly opening the door, fired a blunderbuss down at the two dragoons as they were coming up the stairs; but the bullets grazing against the side of the turnpike, only wounded, and did not kill, them. Then Steele violently threw himself down the stairs among them, and made towards the door to save his life, but lost it upon the spot; for the dragoons who guarded the house despatched him with their broadswords.† I was not with the party when he was killed, being at that time employed in searching at one of the other four houses, but I soon found what had happened, by hearing the noise of the shot made with the blunderbuss; from whence I returned straight to Lanark, and immediately sent one of the dragoons express to General Drummond at Edinburgh.—*Swift's Works*, vol. xii. (*Memoirs of Captain John Creichton*,) pages 57-59, edit. Edinb. 1824.

Note 19.—Iron Rasp, p. 377

The ingenious Mr. R. Chambers's *Traditions of Edinburgh* give the following account of the forgotten rasp or risp:—

This house had a pin or risp at the door, instead of the more modern convenience, a knocker. The pin canonized [rendered interesting by the figure which it makes] in Scottish song was formed of a small rod of iron, twisted or otherwise notched, which was placed perpendicularly, starting out a little from the door, bearing a small ring of the same metal, which an applicant for admittance drew rapidly up and down the nicks, so as to produce a grating sound. Sometimes the rod was simply stretched across the *vizzying* hole, a convenient aperture through which the porter could take cognizance of the person applying; in which case it acted also as a stanchion. These were almost all disused about sixty years ago, when knockers were generally substituted as more genteel. But knockers at that time did not long remain in repute, though they have never been altogether superseded, even by bells, in the Old Town. The comparative merits of knockers and pins was for a long time a subject of doubt, and many knockers got their heads twisted off in the course of the dispute [vol. i, pp. 234, 235, ed. 1825.]

Note 20.—Salisbury Crags, p. 378

The Rev. Mr. Bowls derives the name of these crags, as of the episcopal city in the west of England, from the same root; both, in his opinion, which he very ably defends and illustrates, having been the sites of druidical temples.

Note 21.—Black Watch, p. 378

The well-known original designation of the gallant 42d Regiment. Being the first corps raised for the royal service in the Highlands, and allowed to retain their national garb, they were thus named from the contrast which their dark tartans furnished to the scarlet and white of the other regiments.

Note 22.—Countess of Eglinton, p. 383

Susannah Kennedy, daughter of Sir Archibald Kennedy of Cullean, Bart., by Elizabeth Lesly, daughter of David Lord Newark, third wife of Alexander ninth Earl of Eglinton, and mother of the tenth and eleventh earls. She survived her husband, who died 1729, no less than fifty-seven [one] years, and died March 1780, in her ninety-first year. Allan Ramsay's *Gentle Shepherd*, published 1726, is dedicated to her, in verse, by Hamilton of Bangour.

The following account of this distinguished lady is taken from Boswell's *Life of Johnson* by Mr. Croker:—

Lady Margaret Dalrymple, only daughter of John Earl of Stair, married in

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* Or chamber of state; so called from the *dais*, or canopy and elevation of floor, which distinguished the part of old halls which was occupied by those of high rank. Hence the phrase was obliquely used to signify state in general.

† Wodrow gives a different account of this exploit. "In December this year (1686,) David Steil, in the parish of Lismahagow, was surprised in the fields by Lieutenant Creichton, and after his surrender of himself on quarters, he was in a very little time most barbarously shot, and lies buried in the churchyard there."

1700, to Hugh, third Earl of Loudoun. She died in 1777, aged [nearly] one hundred. Of this venerable lady, and of the Countess of Eglintoune, whom Johnson visited next day, he thus speaks in his *Journey* :—" Length of life is distributed impartially to very different modes of life, in very different climates; and the mountains have no greater examples of age and health than the Lowlands, where I was introduced to two ladies of high quality, one of whom (Lady Loudoun,) in her ninety-fourth year, presided at her table with the full exercise of all her powers, and the other (Lady Eglintoun) had attained her eighty-fourth year, without any diminution of her vivacity, and little reason to accuse time of depredation on her beauty. . . .

" Lady Eglintoune, though she was now in her eighty-fifth year, and had lived in the retirement of the country for almost half a century, was still a very agreeable woman. She was of the noble house of Kennedy, and had all the elevation which the consciousness of such birth inspires. Her figure was majestic, her manners high-bred, her reading extensive, and her conversation elegant. She had been the admiration of the gay circles of life, and the patroness of poets. Dr. Johnson was delighted with his reception here. Her principles in church and state were congenial with his. She knew all his merits, and had heard much of him from her son, Earl Alexander, who loved to cultivate the acquaintance of men of talents in every department. . . .

" In the course of our conversation this day it came out that Lady Eglintoune was married the year before Dr. Johnson was born ; upon which she graciously said to him that she might have been his mother, and that she now adopted him ; and when we were going away, she embraced him, saying, ' My dear son, farewell ! ' My friend was much pleased with this day's entertainment, and owned that I had done well to force him out. . . .

" At Sir Alexander Dick's, from that absence of mind to which every man is at times subject, I told, in a blundering manner, Lady Eglintoune's complimentary adoption of Dr. Johnson as her son ; for I unfortunately stated that her ladyship adopted him as her son, in consequence of her having been married the year *after* he was born. Dr. Johnson instantly corrected me. " Sir, don't you perceive that you are defaming the Countess ? For, supposing me to be her son, and that she was not married till the year after my birth, I must have been her *natural* son." A young lady of quality who was present very handsomely said, ' Might not the son have justified the fault ? ' My friend was much flattered by this compliment, which he never forgot. When in more than ordinary spirits, and talking of his journey in Scotland, he has called to me, " Boswell, what was it that the young lady of quality said of me at Sir Alexander Dick's ? ' Nobody will doubt that I was happy in repeating it."

Note 23.—Earl of Winton, p. 386

The incident here alluded to is thus narrated in Nichols's *Progresses of James I.*, vol. iii. p. 306.

The family (of Winton) owed its first elevation to the union of Sir Christopher Seton with a sister of King Robert Bruce. With King James VI. they acquired great favor, who, having created his brother Earl of Dunfermline in 1599, made Robert, seventh Lord Seton, Earl of Wintoun in 1600. Before the King's accession to the English throne, his Majesty and the Queen were frequently at Seton, where the Earl ever kept a very hospitable table, at which all foreigners of quality were entertained on their visits to Scotland. His lordship died in 1603, and was buried on the 5th of April, on the very day the King left Edinburgh for England. His Majesty, we are told, was pleased to rest himself at the south-west round of the orchard of Seton, on the highway, till the funeral was over, that he might not withdraw the noble company ; and he said that he had lost a good, faithful, and loyal subject.

Note 24.—MacGregor of Glenstrae, p. 387

The 2 of Octr : (1603) Allaster MacGregor of Glanstrae tane be the laird Arkynles, bot escapit againe ; bot after taken be the Earle of Argyll the 4 of Januarii, and brocht to Edr : the 9 of Januar : 1604, wt : 18 mae of hes friendes MacGregors. He wes convoyit to Berwick be the gaird, conform to the Earle's promes ; for he promesit to put him out of Scottis grund. Sua he keipit ane Hielandman's promes, in respect he sent the gaird to convoy him out of Scottis grund ; bot yai wer not directit to pairt wt: him, bot to fetche him bak againe. The 18 of Januar, he came at evin againe to Edinburghe ; and upone the 20 day, he wes hangit at the crosse, and ij of his freindes and name, upone ane gallows ; himself being chieff, he wes hangit his awin hight above the rest of hes freindis. —Birrell's *Diary*, in Dalzell's *Fragments of Scottish History*, pp. 60, 61.

NOTE 25.—HIGHLAND BRIDGES, p. 395

This is, or was at least, a necessary accomplishment. In one of the most beautiful districts of the Highlands was, not many years since, a bridge bearing this startling caution, " Keep to the right side, the left being dangerous.

NOTE 26.—LOCH AWE, p. 396

Loch Awe, upon the banks of which the scene of action took place, is thirty-four miles in length. The north side is bounded by wide muirs and inconsiderable hills, which occupy an extent of country from twelve to twenty miles in breadth, and the whole of this space is enclosed as by a circumvallation. Upon the north it is barred by Loch Eitive, on the south by Loch Awe, and on the east by the deep and dreadful pass of Brandir, through which an arm of the latter lake opens, at about four miles from its eastern extremity, and discharges the river Awe into the former. The pass is about three miles in length ; its east side is bounded by the almost inaccessible steeps which form the base of the vast and rugged mountain of Cruachan, The craigs rise in some places almost perpendicularly from the water, and for their chief extent show no space nor level at their feet, but a rough and narrow edge of stony beach. Upon the whole of these cliffs grew a thick and interwoven wood of all kinds of trees, both timber, dwarf, and coppice ; no track existed through the wilderness, but a winding path, which sometimes crept along the precipitous height, and sometimes descended in a straight pass along the margin of the water. Near the extremity of the defile, a narrow level opened between the water and the crag ; but a great part of this, as well as the preceding steeps, was formerly enveloped in a thicket, which showed little facility to the feet of any but the martins and wild-cats. Along the west side of the pass lies a wall of sheer and barren crags. From behind they rise in rough, uneven, and heathy declivities, out of the wide muir before mentioned, between Loch Eitive aad Loch Awe ; but in front they terminate abruptly in the most frightful precipices, which form the whole side of the pass, and descend at one fall into the water which fills its trough. At the north end of this barrier, and at the termination of the pass, lies that part of the cliff which is called Craiganuni ; at its foot the arm of the lake gradually contracts its water to a very narrow space, and at length terminates at two rocks called the Rocks of Brandir, which form a straight channel, something resembling the lock of a canal. From this outlet there is a continual descent towards Loch Eitive, and from hence the river Awe pours out its current in a furious stream, foaming over a bed broken with holes, and cumbered with masses of granite and whinstone.

If ever there was a bridge near Craiganuni in ancient times, it must have been at the Rocks of Brandir. From the days of Wallace to those of General Wade, there were never passes of this kind but in places of great necessity, too narrow for a boat and too wide for a leap ;; even then they were but an unsafe footway formed of the trunks of trees placed transversely from rock to rock, unstripped of their bark, and destitute of either plank or rail. For such a structure, there is no place in the neighborhood of Craiganuni but at the rocks above mentioned. In the lake and on the river, the water is far too wide ; but at the strait, the space is not greater than might be crossed by a tall mountain pine, and the rocks on either side are formed by nature like a pier. That this point was always a place of passage is rendered probable by its facility, and the use of recent times. It is not long since it was the common gate of the country on either side the river and the pass : the mode of crossing is yet in the memory of people living, and was performed by a little currach moored on either side the water, and a stout cable fixed across the stream from bank to bank, by which the passengers drew themselves across in the manner still practised in places of the same nature. It is no argument against the existence of a bridge in former times, that the above method only existed in ours, rather than a passage of that kind which would seem the more improved expedient. The contradiction is sufficiently accounted for by the decay of timber in the neighborhood. Of old. both oaks and firs of an immense size abounded within a very inconsiderable distance ; but it is now many years since the destruction of the forests of Glen Eitive and Glen Urcha has deprived the country of all the trees of sufficient size to cross the strait of Brandir ; and it is probable that the currach was not introduced till the want of timber had disenabled the inhabitants of the country from maintaining a bridge. It only further remains to be noticed that, at some distance below the Rocks of Brandir, there was formerly a ford, which was used for cattle in the memory of people yet living ; from the narrowness of the passage, the force of the stream, and the broken bed of the river, it was, however, a dangerous pass, and could only be attempted with safety at leisure and by experience.—Notes to *The Bridal of Caolchairn* [pp. 277-279, by John Hay Allan.]

NOTE 27.—BATTLE BETWIXT BRUCE AND MACDOUGAL OF LORN. p. 397

But the King, whose dear-bought experience in war had taught him extreme caution, remained in the Braes of Balquhidder till he had acquired by his spies and outskirrers a perfect knowledge of the disposition of the army of Lorn, and the intention of its leader. He then divided his force into two columns, entrusting the command of the first, in which he placed his archers and lightest armed troops, to Sir James Douglas, whilst he himself took the leading of the other, which consisted principally of his knights and barons. On approaching the defile, Bruce despatched Sir James Douglas by a pathway which the enemy had neglected to occupy, with directions to advance silently, and gain the heights above and in front of the hilly ground where the men of Lorn were concealed; and, having ascertained that this movement had been executed with success, he put himself at the head of his own division, and fearlessly led his men into the defile. Here, prepared as he was for what was to take place, it was difficult to prevent a temporary panic, when the yell, which, to this day, invariably precedes the assault of the mountaineer, burst from the rugged bosom of Ben Cruachan; and the woods which, the moment before, had waved in silence and solitude, gave forth their birth of steel-clad warriors, and, in an instant, became instinct with the dreadful vitality of war. But, although appalled and checked for a brief space by the suddenness of the assault, and the masses of rock which the enemy rolled down from the precipices, Bruce, at the head of his division, pressed up the side of the mountain. Whilst this party assaulted the men of Lorn with the utmost fury, Sir James Douglas and his party shouted suddenly upon the heights in their front, showering down their arrows upon them, and, when these missiles were exhausted, attacking them with their swords and battle-axes. The consequence of such an attack, both in front and rear, was the total discomfiture of the army of Lorn; and the circumstances to which this chief had so confidently looked forward, as rendering the destruction of Bruce almost inevitable, were now turned with fatal effect against himself. His great superiority of numbers cumbered and impeded his movements. Thrust, by the double assault, and by the peculiar nature of the ground, into such narrow room as the pass afforded, and driven to fury by finding themselves cut to pieces in detail, without the power of resistance, the men of Lorn fled towards Loch Eitive, where a bridge thrown over the Awe, and supported upon two immense rocks, known by the name of the Rocks of Brandir, formed the solitary communication between the side of the river where the battle took place and the country of Lorn. Their object was to gain the bridge, which was composed entirely of wood, and, having availed themselves of it in their retreat, to destroy it, and thus throw the impassable torrent of the Awe between them and their enemies. But their intention was instantly detected by Douglas, who, rushing down from the high grounds at the head of his archers and light-armed foresters, attacked the body of the mountaineers, which had occupied the bridge, and drove them from it with great slaughter, so that Bruce and his division, on coming up, passed it without molestation; and, this last resource being taken from them, the army of Lorn were, in a few hours, literally cut to pieces, whilst their chief, who occupied Loch Eitive with his fleet, saw, from his ships, the discomfiture of his men, and found it impossible to give them the least assistance.—[Patrick Fraser] Tytler's "Life of Bruce" [in *Scottish Worthies* (1831–33), vol. i. 413–415].

NOTE 28.—MASSACRE OF GLENCOE, p. 419.

The following succinct account of this too celebrated event may be sufficient for this place:—

In the beginning of the year 1692, an action of unexampled barbarity disgraced the government of King William III. in Scotland. In the August preceding, a proclamation had been issued, offering an indemnity to such insurgents as should take the oaths to the king and queen, on or before the last day of December; and the chiefs of such tribes as had been in arms for James soon after took advantage of the proclamation. But Macdonald of Glencoe was prevented by accident, rather than design, from tendering his submission within the limited time. In the end of December he went to Colonel Hill, who commanded the garrison in Fort William, to take the oaths of allegiance to the government; and the latter having furnished him with a letter to Sir Colin Campbell, sheriff of the county of Argyll, directed him to repair immediately to Inverary, to make his submission in a legal manner before that magistrate. But the way to Inverary lay through almost impassable mountains, the season was extremely rigorous, and the whole country was covered with a deep snow. So eager, however, was Macdonald to take the oaths before the limited time should expire, that, though the road lay within half a mile of his own house, he stopped not to visit his fam-

ily, and, after various obstructions, arrived at Inverary. The time had elapsed, and the sheriff hesitated to receive his submission; but Macdonald prevailed by his importunities, and even tears, in inducing that functionary to administer to him the oath of allegiance, and to certify the cause of his delay. At this time Sir John Dalrymple, afterwards Earl of Stair, being in attendance upon William as Secretary of State for Scotland, took advantage of Macdonald's neglecting to take the oaths within the time prescribed, and procured from the king a warrant of military execution against that chief and his whole clan. This was done at the instigation of the Earl of Breadalbane, whose lands the Glencoe men had plundered, and whose treachery to government in negotiating with the Highland clans Macdonald himself had exposed. The king was accordingly persuaded that Glencoe was the main obstacle to the pacification of the Highlands; and the fact of the unfortunate chief's submission having been concealed, the sanguinary orders for proceeding to military execution against his clan were in consequence obtained. The warrant was both signed and countersigned by the king's own hand, and the Secretary urged the officers who commanded in the Highlands to execute their orders with the utmost rigor. Campbell of Glenlyon, a captain in Argyll's regiment, and two subalterns, were ordered to repair to Glencoe on the first of February with a hundred and twenty men. Campbell, being uncle to young Macdonald's wife, was received by the father with all manner of friendship and hospitality. The men were lodged at free quarters in the houses of his tenants, and received the kindest entertainment. Till the 13th of the month the troops lived in the utmost harmony and familiarity with the people; and on the very night of the massacre the officers passed the evening at cards in Macdonald's house. In the night Lieutenant Lindsay, with a party of soldiers, called in a friendly manner at his door, and was instantly admitted. Macdonald, while in the act of rising to receive his guest, was shot dead through the back with two bullets. His wife had already dressed; but she was stripped naked by the soldiers, who tore the rings off her fingers with their teeth. The slaughter now became general, and neither age nor infirmity was spared. Some women, in defending their children, were killed; boys, imploring mercy, were shot dead by officers on whose knees they hung. In one place nine persons, as they sat enjoying themselves at table, were butchered by the soldiers. In Inverriggon, Campbell's own quarters, nine men were first bound by the soldiers, and then shot at intervals, one by one. Nearly forty persons were massacred by the troops; and several who fled to the mountains perished by famine and the inclemency of the season. Those who escaped owed their lives to a tempestuous night. Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton, who had received the charge of the execution from Dalrymple, was on his march with four hundred men, to guard all the passes from the valley of Glencoe; but he was obliged to stop by the severity of the weather, which proved the safety of the unfortunate clan. Next day he entered the valley, laid the houses in ashes, and carried away the cattle and spoil, which were divided among the officers and soldiers.—*Article* "BRITAIN," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Eighth Edition.

NOTE 29.—FIDELITY OF THE HIGHLANDERS, p. 429

Of the strong, undeviating attachment of the Highlanders to the person, and their deference to the will or commands, of their chiefs and superiors, their rigid adherence to duty and principle, and their chivalrous acts of self-devotion to these in the face of danger and death, there are many instances recorded in General Stewart of Garth's interesting *Sketches of the Highlander and Highland Regiments*, which might not inaptly supply parallels to the deeds of the Romans themselves, at the era when Rome was in her glory. The following instances of such are worthy of being here quoted:

In the year 1795, a serious disturbance broke out in Glasgow among the Breadalbane Fencibles. Several men having been confined and threatened with corporal punishment, considerable discontent and irritation were excited among their comrades, which increased to such violence, that, when some men were confined in the guard-house, a great proportion of the regiment rushed out and forcibly released the prisoners. This violation of military discipline was not to be passed over, and accordingly measures were immediately taken to secure the ringleaders. But so many were equally concerned, that it was difficult, if not impossible, to fix the crime on any, as being more prominently guilty. And here was shown a trait of character worthy of a better cause, and which originated from a feeling alive to the disgrace of a degrading punishment. The soldiers being made sensible of the nature of their misconduct, and the consequent necessity of public example, *several men voluntarily offered themselves to stand trial*, and suffer the sentence of the law as an atonement for the whole. These men were accordingly marched to Edinburgh Castle, tried, and four condemned to be

shot. Three of them were afterwards reprieved, and the fourth, Alexander Sutherland, was shot on Musselburgh Sands.

The following semi-official account of this unfortunate misunderstanding was published at the time :—

"During the afternoon of Monday, when a private of the light company of the Breadalbane Fencibles, who had been confined for a military offence, was released by that company, and some other companies who had assembled in a tumultuous manner before the guard-house, no person whatever was hurt, and no violence offered ; and however unjustifiable the proceedings, it originated not from any disrespect or ill-will to their officers, but from a mistaken point of honor, in a particular set of men in the battalion, who thought themselves disgraced by the impending punishment of one of their number. The men have, in every respect, since that period conducted themselves with the greatest regularity and strict subordination. The whole of the battalion seemed extremely sensible of the improper conduct of such as were concerned, whatever regret they might feel for the fate of the few individuals who had so readily given themselves up as prisoners, to be tried for their own and others' misconduct."

On the march to Edinburgh, a circumstance occurred, the more worthy of notice, as it shows a strong principle of honor and fidelity to his word and to his officer in a common Highland soldier. One of the men stated to the officer commanding the party, that he knew what his fate would be, but that he had left business of the utmost importance to a friend in Glasgow, which he wished to transact before his death ; that, as to himself, he was fully prepared to meet his fate ; but with regard to his friend, he could not die in peace unless the business was settled ; and that, if the officer would suffer him to return to Glasgow, a few hours there would be sufficient, and he would join him before he reached Edinburgh, and march as a prisoner with the party. The soldier added, "You have known me since I was a child ; you know my country and kindred, and you may believe I shall never bring you to any blame by a breach of the promise I now make, to be with you in full time to be delivered up in the Castle." This was a startling proposal to the officer, who was a judicious, humane man, and knew perfectly his risk and responsibility in yielding to such an extraordinary application. However, his confidence was such, that he complied with the request of the prisoner, who returned to Glasgow at night, settled his business, and left the town before daylight to redeem his pledge. He took a long circuit to avoid being seen, apprehended as a deserter, and sent back to Glasgow, as probably his account of his officer's indulgence would not have been credited. In consequence of this caution, and the lengthened march through woods and over hills by an unfrequented route, there was no appearance of him at the hour appointed. The perplexity of the officer when he reached the neighborhood of Edinburgh may be easily imagined. He moved forward slowly indeed, but no soldier appeared ; and unable to delay any longer, he marched up to the Castle, and as he was delivering over the prisoners, but before any report was given in, Macmartin the absent soldier, rushed in among his fellow-prisoners, all pale with anxiety and fatigue, and breathless with apprehension of the consequences in which his delay might have involved his benefactor.

In whatever light the conduct of the officer (my respectable friend, Major Colin Campbell) may be considered, either by military men or others, in this memorable exemplification of the characteristic principle of his countrymen, fidelity to their word, it cannot but be wished that the soldier's magnanimous self-devotion had been taken as an atonement for his own misconduct and that of the whole, who also had made a high sacrifice, in the voluntary offer of their lives for the conduct of their brother soldiers. Are these a people to be treated as malefactors, without regard to their feelings and principles ; and might not a discipline somewhat different from the usual mode be, with advantage, applied to them ?—Vol. II. pp. 413–415, 3d edit.

A soldier of this regiment (the Argyllshire Highlanders) deserted, and emigrated to America, where he settled. Several years after his desertion, a letter was received from him, with a sum of money, for the purpose of procuring one at two men to supply his place in the regiment, as the only recompense he could make for "breaking his oath to his God and his allegiance to his king, which preyed on his conscience in such a manner, that he had no rest night nor day."

This man had had good principles early instilled into his mind, and the disgrace which he had been originally taught to believe would attach to a breach of faith now operated with full effect. The soldier who deserted from the 42d Regiment at Gibraltar, in 1797, exhibited the same remorse of conscience after he had violated his allegiance. In countries where such principles prevail, and regulate the character of a people, the mass of the population may, on occasions of trial, be reckoned on as sound and trustworthy.—Vol. II. p. 218.

The late James Menzies of Culdares, having engaged in the rebellion of 1715,

and been taken at Preston, in Lancashire, was carried to London, where he was tried and condemned, but afterwards reprieved. Grateful for this clemency, he remained at home in 1745, but, retaining a predilection for the old cause, he sent a handsome charger as a present to Prince Charles, when advancing through England. The servant who led and delivered the horse was taken prisoner, and carried to Carlisle, where he was tried and condemned. To extort a discovery of the person who sent the horse, threats of immediate execution in case of refusal, and offers of pardon on his giving information, were held out ineffectually to the faithful messenger. He knew, he said, what the consequence of a disclosure would be to his master, and his own life was nothing in the comparison. When brought out for execution, he was again pressed to inform on his master. He asked if they were serious in supposing him such a villain. If he did what they desired, and forgot his master and his trust, he could not return to his native country, for Glenlyon would be no home or country for him, as he would be despised and hunted out of the glen. Accordingly he kept steady to his trust, and was executed. This trusty servant's name was John Macnaughton, from Glenlyon, in Perthshire; he deserves to be mentioned, both on account of his incorruptible fidelity, and of his testimony to the honorable principles of the people, and to their detestation of a breach of trust to a kind and honorable master, however great might be the risk, or however fatal the consequences, to the individual himself.—Vol. I, pp. 52, 53.

GLOSSARY

OF

WORDS, PHRASES, AND ALLUSIONS

Aboon, above
Absolute, Sir Anthony, a character in Sheridan's *Rivals* (1775)
Ad Græcas kalendas, to the Greek Calends (an indefinite period)
Allan, Sir William, Scottish painter (1782–1850), and a personal friend of Sir Walter Scott
Almanzor, a character in Dryden's tragedy, *The Conquest of Granada* (1670)
Amatus and amata, lover, male and female
Amourettes, love affairs, intrigues
"*And whare trew ye I gaed?*" (p. 364), from C. Macklin's *Man of the World* (1781), a satire on the Scots
Aneurin, a Welsh bard, celebrated the battle of Cattraeth (*q.v.*) in a poem entitled *Gododin*
Angelica, ribs of the leaves of dwarf gentian, candied or preserved
Appian (highway), connected Rome with the chief towns in the south of Italy, was made in part by Appius Claudius Cæcus in 313 B.C.
Arblast, cross-bow
Argyle's rising, in support of the Duke of Monmouth, against James II. of England, in 1685
Arlechino, or *Arlecchino*, harlequin. The harlequin of the old Italian stage was a clown, or jest-maker and prank-player
Armorican, a native of Brittany or Normandy
Assoilzie, to absolve, acquit of sin
Aught, possession, property
Auld Reekie, Old Smoky, a popular name for Edinburgh
Ave Regina Cœli, hail, Queen of Heaven!
Awen, flow of poetic inspiration
Awmous, alms

Backspeir, to cross-question, trace back a story, statement
Bailey, the space between the outer and inner walls of a castle
Baillie, Joanna, author of a series of *Plays on the Passions* (1798–1836)
Banquette, a stone bench running along the inside of the ramparts
Bastille, a fortress prison
Bauld, bold
Bayle's, or *Bayll's*, a tavern in Shakespeare Square (now disappeared) near the present General Post Office, Edinburgh
Beast who laughs (p. 260), the striped hyæna
Bell-the-cat, to undertake a dangerous work. In the reign of James III. of Scotland, Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus, "belled-the-cat" by putting to death the king's unworthy favorite Cochrane. *See* Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather*, chap. xxii.
Benedicite, bless you!
Bereford, or *Bearford, Park*, now George Street, Edinburgh
Bestiall, cattle
Beverage, more elegant and costly (p. 8), wine
Bezant or *byzant*, a gold coin = 10s. to 20s., widely current in the Middle Ages
Bide, to endure, bear; to stay, remain
Bien, frugal, comfortable
Big, to build; *biggit*, built; *bigging*, a building
Birling, a boat with six or eight oars, used on the west coast of Scotland
Bittock, a short distance, but proverbially an extra long distance
Blink, a moment, brief space of time
Bobadil, Captain, a character in Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humor* (1598)
Bodach, a spirit, specter
Boddle, a Scotch copper coin = 1-6th penny English
Bodesman, one who makes a bode, bid, offer to buy
Bogle, specter
Bonassus (p. 370). *Compare* the French word *bonasse*, an extremely simple, almost childish, person
Bonbonnière, sweetmeat-box
Bon gré, mal gré, willy nilly, whether one is willing or not
Borrel, rustic, rude
Bowles, Rev. Mr. (William Lisle Bowles); poet and antiquary, author of the antiquarian work, *Hermes Britannicus* (1828)
Brach, a dog that hunts by scent
Breacan, that which is variegated, *i.e.* the tartan

Brownie, a gnome or dwarf of supernatural character
Brown's Square, in Edinburgh. *See Redgauntlet*, Note 10, p. 435

Cader-Idris, meaning the "chair of Idris," a mountain about 3000 feet high in North Wales
Cairleon, or *Caerleon*, on the Usk in Monmouthshire, closely associated with the history of King Arthur
Cancelier, to turn suddenly on the wing before striking
Canny, safe, lucky
Carcanet, a jeweled necklace
Carline, an old woman
Carritch, the catechism
Carthusian silence. The monks of the Carthusian order were bound to preserve almost unbroken silence
Cateran, a Highland robber
Cattraeth, a battle fought in 603 A.D. between the Britons of Strathclyde (southwest of Scotland) and the Saxons, celebrated by Aneurin (*q.v.*)
Chandos, John, a distinguished soldier and follower of Edward the Black Prince, died in 1370
Chappe, a large military cloak
Chappit, struck
Chasse-café, more correctly, *pousse-café*, a small glass of brandy or liquor taken after coffee
Cheir, (riotous), cheer, entertainment
Chère exquise, exquisite cheer, fare
Chield, fellow
Cistercians, a branch or offshoot from the Benedictines; they aimed at a stricter observance of their common rules than the mother order
Clachan, hamlet
Clack, the clapper of a mill; *clack-mill*, a windmill rattle for frightening birds
Clarendon, Lord, Edward Hyde, author of *History of the Rebellion in England* (1704–7)
Cloudberry, is not scarlet (p. 415), but of a pale orange color, and in appearance resembles a large raspberry
Cnicht, a servant, follower
Cockade, white. *See* White cockade
Cockburn, Mr., afterwards Lord Cockburn (1779–1854), took a warm interest in preserving the natural beauties of Edinburgh
Coistrel, an inferior groom, base varlet, knave
Colune, or *Colunwy, Castle of*, Colwyn Castle in Radnorshire, has now almost entirely disappeared
Comperit, summoned to attend court
Comus, the god of revelry, in ancient Greek mythology
Confessor, royal and holy, King Edward the Confessor
Conjuro vos, etc. (p. 68), I conjure you, spirits of evil, great and small
Corehouse Linn, a waterfall in the Clyde, about 2 miles above Lanark
Cornage, the obligation to blow a horn (*cornu*) on the approach of an enemy
Cornhill, on the Tweed, 2 miles from Coldstream
Coronach, the Highland lament for the dead
Corps de garde, the guards
Corso, a wide, straight street in Italian towns
Cottar, a peasant or cottager living on a farm
Couchee, a levee or audience held just before retiring to sleep
Counter, hunt. *See* Hunt counter
Crack, gossip
Crags, presumably Salisbury Crags, a part of the mountainous mass of Arthur's Seat, overlooking the Canongate. *See* Note 20, p. 478
Cramer, a small merchant, chapman
Creagh, a cattle-lifting raid, foray
Cretan warrior, probably Minos the Younger, king of Crete, who demanded the human tribute from Athens for the Minotaur
Croce, cross
Crogan, a somewhat contumelious epithet applied by the Welsh to the English
Crush a cup, drink a cup of wine, perhaps from the practice of crushing grapes into a cup in wine countries. *Comp.* the phrase "crack a bottle"
Crw, or *cwrw*, ale, beer
Curatio est canonica, non coacta, the cure is affected by following the rules of art, not by using violence
Curch, a kerchief for covering the head
Currach, or *curragh*, a small skiff, consisting of a slight framework covered with hide or canvas
Cymmorodion, a Welsh society for promoting the native literature and arts, re-established in 1877
Cyprus, a thin, transparent kind of crape

Dalmatique, a long ecclesiastical robe with wide sleeves
Dang, knocked down, struck violently
Deheubarth, the old British name for South Wales
Der alter Herr ist verrückt, the old lord is frantic
Dermid, sons of, the clan Campbell
Destrier, a steed, warhorse
Deus vobiscum, God be with you
Diapré, diapered, variegated—a heraldic term
Doch-an-dorroch, the parting-cup
Doddered, overgrown with parasitic plants
Doe, John, and Richard Roe, the fictitious claimant and defendant in an old English law process (ejectment) for recovering possession of land
Doer, agent, attorney—a Scots law term
Dole, sorrow
Door-cheek, the door-post
Do veniam, I give pardon or leave
Dun, a fortified hill
Dunlap cheese, made at Dunlop, a village on the borders of Ayrshire and Renfrewshire
Durame, Durham

Eathe, easy
Edgeworthstown, young ladies of, the family of which Maria Edgeworth,

the novelist, was the brightest ornament
Elfland, fairyland
Elf-stricken, bewitched
Empress - Queen, Maria Theresa, Empress of Austria, Queen of Hungary
En bagatelle, as a trifling matter
Epic poem, receipt for making. See Pope's paper in *The Guardian*, No. 78
Erar, rather, sooner
Es spuckt, specters are abroad
Ethnic, heathen, not Christian
Ettrick Shepherd, James Hogg, a Scottish poet (1770–1835)
Eudorchawg, a chain of twisted gold links, a mark of chieftainship amongst the Welsh
Evened, compared, lowered
Ex capite lecti, from the head of the bed
Ex cathedra, from the chair

Fabliaux, tales in verse, peculiar to France, 12th to 14th century, and generally satirical in character
Falkirk, where Prince Charles's Highlanders defeated General Hawley in 1746
Fash trouble
Fey, predestined to death, doomed
Fiançailles, solemn betrothal
Fion, Fingal, the hero of Macpherson's *Ossian*
Flaminian (highway), connected Rome with Rimini on the Adriatic, was made by C. Flaminius in 220 B.C.
Fleam, a kind of lancet
Fleech, to flatter, cajole
Flemings in Pembrokeshire. See Pembrokeshire, Flemings in
Fletcher of Salton, one of the most accomplished Scotsmen of his time, a supporter of Monmouth in 1685, and an ardent politician
Foire, a fair
Fontenoy, near Tournai, in Belgium, where the Allies under the Duke of Cumberland were defeated by the French under Marshal Saxe in 1745
Forbears, ancestors
Forthink, to repent of, regret
Fortune's, a tavern in Old Stamp Office Close, off the High Street, Edinburgh
Frampal, unruly
Franklin, a freeholder, yeoman
Fray, to frighten
Frayings, peelings of a deer's horn
Frederick of Prussia, surnamed the "Great," king of Prussia (1740–1786)

Ganging back, losing money
Garde Doloureuse, the castle of sorrow or mourning
Gart, caused, made
Gate, way road, manner
Gaud, an ornament, trinket
Gear, business, affair; property, goods
Geoffrey of Monmouth, an English chronicler or historian of the 12th century
Gillian of Croydon, should be Marian, if the old story of *Grim the Collier of Croydon* is referred to
Giraldus de Barri, or *Giraldus Cambrensis*, a Welsh ecclesiastic and historian of the reign of Henry II.
Glenalvon, a reference to John Home's tragedy of *Douglas* (1756)
Glengarry, Macdonnell of, a supporter of Prince Charles in 1745
Glenlyon, Captain Campbell of, who commanded the party that perpetrated the Massacre of Glencoe
Glenshee, in the northeast of Perthshire
Gloucester (p. 276), no doubt the half-brother of Matilda and uncle of Henry II. is meant, although he died in 1147, more than forty years before the events of this story
Green Man, the title of a comedy, by one Jones, produced at the Haymarket Theater, London, in 1818, in which Daniel Terry acted "Mr. Green"
Greishogh, a glowing ember
Grew, a greyhound
Groningen, a town in the north of Holland
Guardian, the periodical written by Steele, Addison, etc. (1713)
Guidon, a small flag or standard
Guilder, a Dutch florin = 1s. 8d.
Gwentland, correspond- to the south-east parts of Wales
Gwydir, or *Gwedir, Family. See History of the Gwydir Family*
Gyre-carlin, a witch

Habergeon, a short coat of mail without sleeves
"*Had you but seen*," etc. (p. 401), inscribed on an obelisk near Fort William. *See* Captain E. Burt's *Letters from the North of Scotland*, Letter xxvi.
Hæc nos novimus esse nihil, this we understood to be nothing
Haggard, an untrained or refractory hawk
Hamilton of Bangour, William, Scottish Jacobite poet (1704–1754)
Harley, Edward, second Earl of Oxford, the patron of Prior, Pope, and other writers of his day (1689–1741)
Hengist. See Horsa
Heresy of the mountaineers. See Mountaineers, heresy of
Herr Keller - master, Mr. Cellarer. *See* Kellermaster
Hinc illæ lachrymæ, hence these tears, that's where the shoe pinches
Hippocras, wine seasoned with spices
Hippocrates, one of the most celebrated physicians of the ancient Greeks, lived in the 5th century B.C.
History of the Gwydir Family, by Sir John Wynne (1770)
Home, John, Scottish pastor and dramatist (1722–1808)
Horsa, the brother of Hengist, who led the Saxons when they invaded England in the 5th century
Houndsfoot, or *hundsfott*,

a mean scoundrel, villain
Howell Dha, Howel the Good, king of Wales during the first half of the 10th century
Hunt counter, to run backwards on the scent, instead of following it up
Hydromel, a drink made of honey, diluted with water

"*I care not*," etc. (p. 371), from Ben Jonson, *Every Man in his Humor*, Act i. sc. 4
Iconoclast, a religious sect of the Eastern (Roman) Empire, in the 8th century, specially opposed to the use of sacred images
Ilk, each
Inchaffray, a ruined abbey, about 8 miles west of Perth
Infare, or *infair*, an entertainment given to celebrate entering into a new house; a wedding reception
Inquisitio post mortem, the inquiry made as to the cause of death
In terrorem, as a warning, deterrent to
Inundation, great. Flanders was inundated in 1100 or 1108, and Holland in 1170 and 1173; on this last occasion, to which Rose Flammock may be supposed to refer (p. 66), the Zuyder Zee was greatly enlarged
Ipsa corpora, the very pieces

Jameson, or *Jamesone*, *George*, a portrait-painter of the 17th century, sometimes called "the Scottish Van Dyke"
Jangler, an idle talker
Jenkins, Henry, reputed to have been 169 years old at the time of his death in 1670
Jerfalcon, or *gyrfalcon*, the noble falcon used for hawking
Jimply, scarcely
Jonglerie, jugglery
Judas Maccabæus, a patriotic priest of the Jews, who endeavored to rouse his people against their conquerors, the kings of Syria, in the 2d century B.C. *See* "First Book of Maccabees," chaps. iii.-ix., in The Apocrypha

Kail-pot, cooking-pot
Kaim of Urie, or *Ury*, near Stonehaven, in Kincardineshire
Kain, a tax payable to the landlord in kind, such as poultry, eggs, etc.
Kaiser, emperor
Kale-yard, vegetable garden
Kammerer, the head of any domestic department in a large household
Keller-master, more correctly *kellermeister*, cellarer, butler
Kennel, gutter
Kenneth, children of, the clan Mackenzie
Kestril, or *kestrel*, an inferior kind of hawk—a term of contempt
Kidron and Shimei. See 1 Kings ii. 37
King Somebody (p. 282), Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon
Kintail, the headquarters of the Mackenzie clan in the south-west of Ross-shire
Kirkcaldy, in Fifeshire, is called the "long town," because it stretches 4 miles along the coast
Kistvaen, a monumental arrangement of stones marking the burial-place of an ancient British chief
Knight of the Swan, the hero of the French mediæval romance, *The History of Helyas, Knight of the Swan*

Ladykirk, on the Tweed, 6 miles from Cold-stream
Lai, a short legendary tale in verse, song, lay
Langside, a suburb of Glasgow, where Queen Mary's forces were defeated by those of the Regent Murray on 13th May 1568. See the account in *The Abbot*, chap. xxxvii.
Laputa, sage of, an allusion to Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, "Voyage to Laputa," chap. v.
Latten, a kind of brass or bronze
Lauderdale, Duchess of, Lady Dysart, the second wife of John Duke of Lauderdale, in Charles II.'s reign, an ambitious and extravagant woman
Lawing, an inn reckoning
Legate a latere, an ambassador of the Pope of the highest rank
Lesouris, grazing-grounds, pastures
Lewis, Lord, i.e. Gordon, son of the second Duke of Gordon, supported Prince Charles in 1745
Lewis's History. The History of Great Britain, by John Lewis (1729)
Limbo Lake, hades, the infernal or lower world
Lithe-alos, mild but good Saxon ale
Llhuyd, or *Lhuyd, Edward*, a Welsh antiquary, author of *Archæologia Britannica* (1707), a learned philological work
Lochaber axe, a sort of halberd, a bill-like blade and a hook, both at one end of a long shaft
Lochiel, Cameron of, a supporter of Prince Charles in 1745
Lollard, a religious sect in England, in the 14th century, who were opposed to the use of sacred images
Lombard, a merchant or banker from one of the North Italian cities; these so-called Lombards were very active traders from the 12th to the 14th century
Looten, let, permitted
Lounger, the periodical written by Mackenzie, Craig, Abercromby, and others (1785–87)
Lower Empire, the Byzantine, Greek, or Eastern (Roman) Empire
Luckie, a title of respect given to old women in Scotland
Lurdane, worthless, stupid
Lusignan, a character in Aaron Hill's *Zara* (1736), an adaptation of Voltaire's *Zaire*

MacCallan Mhor, the Earl (Duke) of Argyle, the head of the clan Campbell
Macdhonuil Dhu or, *Duibh*, the patronymic of the clan Cameron
Mackenzie, Henry, author of *The Man of Feeling* (1771)
Madin, maiden, never

been brought to surrender
Mains, the home farm and its buildings
Maitland, William, author of *History of Edinburgh* (1753) and other works
Malvolio, a character in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*
Man, Reginald of. See Reginald of Man
Manchet, a small loaf of fine white bread
Mandeville, Sir John, a reputed traveler of the 14th century, who recorded astonishing marvels; but he really copied most of his book from other sources (Friar Odoric, etc.), and so is doubly an unveracious narrator
Mandrin, Louis, celebrated smuggler and bandit of the south of France, broken on the wheel at Valence in 1755
Mangonel, an engine for throwing huge stones
Mara, in ancient Norse mythology, the nightmare
Marry guep, i.e. "marry go up"—an expression of contempt
Mathravel, or *Mathrafal*, a district of Montgomeryshire
Maturin, Charles Robert, author of a tragedy, *Bertram* (1816)
Maugre, in spite of
Maun, must
Medicum, physician
Medois, meadows
Meister Keller-master, Master Cellarer. *See* Keller-master
Menstruum, a fluid substance that acts as a solvent
Mezentius, an allusion to Virgil's *Æneid*, Bk. viii. 485
Mezzo termini, half-measures
Minivair, or *miniver*, a mixed or spotted fur, used for trimmings, in the Middle Ages
Mirror, the periodical written by Mackenzie, Craig, Abercromby, and others (1779–1780)
Miserere me, Domine, Lord, have mercy upon me
Mithridate, an antidote against poison. Mithridates, king of Pontus, was celebrated for his knowledge of poisons and their antidotes
Mizzles, measles
Molière's recipe, an allusion to a legend that the comedy-writer Molière read his plays in MS. to an old woman to whose judgment and opinion he attached great value
Monmouth, Geoffrey of. See Geoffrey of Monmouth
Morbus sonticus, a serious disease, affording a valid legal excuse for absence
Moringer, a family name. The use of the article "the" before Moringer conforms to a German practice (or habit) of speaking and writing
Mort, the flourish of the trumpet that intimates the death of the game
Mortier, a knight's bonnet, made of velvet
Moss, a marshy, boggy place
Mountaineers, heresy of the, most probably the Waldenses, who dwelt amongst the Alps of Piedmont and Provence, though their movement did not originate until late in the 12th century
Murray, Will, manager of the Theater-Royal, Edinburgh. *See* Appendix, p. 465
Muscadine, a sweet, strong Italian wine
Mystery, a sort of religious play or drama of the Middle Ages

Nainsell, own self
Najara, or rather *Navarette*, fought between Edward the Black Prince and Henry de Trastamare of Castile in 1367
Naker, a kind of kettle-drum
Nares, nostrils
Netherbow, an old city gate of Edinburgh, standing across the High Street half-way between Holyrood and St. Giles's
Nominis umbra, under the shelter of the name
"*Non audet*," etc. (p. 156), no one dares to give who has not studied; physicians prescribe medicines and artificers labor at their own craft. Quoted from Horace, *Epistles*, Bk. ii. 1, 115
Non sum qualis eram, I am not what I once was
Nor' Loch, a deep depression below the Castle of Edinburgh, where the Princes Street Gardens now are, was "improved" in 1763, and again through an Act of Parliament obtained in 1816
Norval, a reference to John Home's tragedy of *Douglas* (1756)
Nym, Corporal, in Shakespeare's *Merry Wives of Windsor*

Odor lucri, the savor of gain
Œdipus, son of the king of Thebes (Greece), killed his own father and committed incest with his mother, not knowing either of them
Ogilvy, Hon. Mrs. Colonel, a lady who "finished off" the education of young ladies, amongst others Scott's mother
Ogleby, Lord, a character in *Clandestine Marriage* (1766), by Garrick and Coleman
"*Omni membrorum damno*," etc. (p. 335), with the loss of all his members, and worse, the loss of mind, which prevents him from recognizing either the names of his servants or the faces of his friends. From Juvenal, *Satires*, x. 232–235
Orestes, slew his mother, who had murdered his father Agamemnon, for which he was seized with madness and haunted by the Furies
Outskirrer, outscourer, scout
Owsen, oxen

"*Pah, an ounce of civet*," etc. (p. 365), from *Lear*, Act iv. sc. 6
Pantler, the servant who had charge of the bread
Par amours, in illicit love, for love's sake
Paritor, the summoner of an ecclesiastical court
Parsonage, money paid for the support of a parson, the greater tithes
Partridge, a character in

Fielding's novel, *Tom Jones* (1749)

Paynim, pagan, heathen

Pembrokeshire, Flemings in, colonies of the people were settled in that county by both Henry I. and Henry II. of England

Pendicle, appendage, dependency

Pennoncelle, a small pennon or streamer fixed to a spear

Per ambages, by ambiguous methods

Peri Bathous, or in full Martinus Scriblerus, *Peri Bathous, or the Art of Sinking in Poetry*, chap. xi., by Pope and others

Persona standi in judicio, legal status, recognition and responsibility

Perth, Duke of, of the Drummond family, a supporter of Prince Charles in 1745

Pertinax, Sir. See Sir Pertinax

Pigment, highly-spiced wine sweetened with honey

Pitscottie, Robert Lindsay of, author of *Chronicles of Scotland* (down to 1565)

Placket, a pocket

Pochay, a post-chaise

Poet (on General Wade's roads, p. 399), Captain Burt, author of *Letters from the North of Scotland* (1754), was believed to be of Irish origin

Pomoragrains. See Guy Mannering, chap. xxxvi. p. 246

Pompey in MEASURE FOR MEASURE, in Act iii. sc. 2. Pompey is the name of the clown

Porte cochère, the carriage gate and entrance

Pottle, a two-quart measure, a large tankard

Powell, David, translated into English Caradoc's (Welsh) *History of Wales* (1774)

Powys Castle, the seat, not of the Duke of Beaufort, but of the Earl of Powis;

Powys Land, a former kingdom in the south of Wales

Preses, or *præses*, the president, chairman

Preston, or *Prestonpans*, where Prince Charles's Highlanders defeated General Cope in 1745

Prior, Matthew, English poet (1664–1721), author of *Henry and Emma*, etc.

Propale, to publish, disclose

Prospero, a character in Shakespeare's *Tempest*

Ptolemais, Acre, or St. Jean d'Acre, on the coast of Syria. There Archbishop Baldwin died in 1190; he left his private property to be expended for the recovery of Palestine from the Saracens

Quaigh, a small drinking-cup

Quarrel, a square-headed bolt hurled from a military engine

Quhen, when

Quhilk, which

Qui jurat, etc. (p. 56), he who sweareth to his neighbor and deceiveth him not

Quis habitabit, etc. (p. 56), Who shall sojourn in Thy tabernacle, who shall dwell in Thy holy hill?

Rachis, or *raches*, dogs that hunt by scent

Rambler, the periodical conducted and written (1750–52) by Dr. Johnson

Ramillies (wig), ended in a long plait, which had a large bow of ribbon at the top and a smaller one at the bottom

Randolph, Lady (p. 404), a character in John Home's tragedy, *Douglas* (1756)

Rappee, a strong kind of snuff

Rascaille, base, ignoble

Ratten, a rat

Receipt for making epic poem. See Epic poem, etc.

Reginald of Man, this king, a descendant of the Norse chief, Goddard Crovan, mentioned in *Peveril of the Peak*, reigned forty years, from 1187

Reiving, pillaging

Renyeis, reins

Requiescant in pace, peace be to their ashes

Resetting, giving shelter to persons proscribed by, or obnoxious to, the law

Revêche, tart, crabbed

Riding of the Scottish Parliament, the formal opening of it by a mounted procession of high dignitaries and constituent members. The last riding, marked by unusual pomp, took place on 6th May 1703

Rigging-tree, the principal beam in the roof

Roast, rule the (p. 278), a less common form of the saying "rule the roost"

Roe, Richard. See Doe, John, etc.

Rote, a small lute, the strings of which were played by turning a wheel

Rowing, rocking, rolling

Rudel, Geoffrey, a Gascon troubadour of the 12th century, who is said to have died for love of the Countess of Tripoli (in Syria)

Rus in urbe, the country in the midst of the town

Sacring bell, the bell rung at the elevation of the host in high mass

Sain, to pray for a blessing on, bless

St. Andrews, the seat of a university in Fifeshire

St. Clement's day, 23d November, the festival of St. Clement the Pope

St. Dunstan's clock, figures on (p. xxiii.), two half-clad giants, armed with clubs, with which they struck the quarters. St. Dunstan's was in Fleet Street, London

St. Hubert, the patron saint of those who follow the chase. *See Quentin Durward*, Note 4, p. 435

St. Martin's tide, 11th November

Sarsnet, or *sarsenet*, a kind of thin, soft woven silk

Sassenach, Saxon, *i.e.* Lowland Scotch or English

Satis est, mi fili, enough, my son

Scandalum magnatum, an offence against those in authority

Schelm, rascal, scoundrel

Scooroora, or *Scururan*, a conspicuous mountain overlooking Glenshiel, in the extreme south-west of Ross-shire

Scottish Parliament, riding of. See Riding, etc.

Sederunt, a meeting
Sennachie, or *seannachie*, a Highland chronicler or genealogist
Sewer, the officer who had charge of the viands at a feast, and provided water for the guests to wash their fingers with
Shairman, chairman, porter to carry a sedan chair, in old Edinburgh generally Highlanders
Shieling, a Highland hut
Shimei and Kidron. See 1 Kings ii. 37
Sic itur ad astra, this is the path to heaven
Sidier roy, the red soldier, a private of the English army
Sir Pertinax, i.e. Sir Pertinax MacSycophant, in Macklin's *Man of the World* (1781)
Sir Tristrem, Tristram, or *Tristan*, one of the knights of King Arthur's Round Table, nephew of King Mark of Cornwall, and a famous hunter
Skaithis, scathes, hurts, harm
Skirl, to screech, creak
Slaid, slid ; or perhaps *staid*, remained behind
Snood, a fillet or ribbon to bind the hair, worn by unmarried young women in Scotland
Societas mater discordiarum, partnership is the mother of discord
Soldan, sultan, particularly Saladin, the enemy of the Crusader
Spectator, the periodical written by Addison, Steele, etc. (1711–1712)
Spontoon, a sort of half-pike carried by certain officers in the British army
Sporran, or *sporran mollach*, the goat-skin pouch worn by Highlanders suspended from the waist
Springald, a youth
Staill, the main body of the hunting-party
Stewart, John Roy, a supporter of Prince Charles in 1745
Stilts (of a plough), handles
Stirk, a young bullock
Strath, a valley
Sub vexillo, etc. (p. 342), under the royal standard in the battle near Branxton, *i.e.* Flodden Field
Surquedry, self-importance, assumption, arrogance
Susannah (chaste). See in The Apocrypha the book entitled "The History of Susanna"
Swan, Knight of. See Knight of the Swan

Tabatière, a snuff-box
Tacksman, a higher class of tenant
Taliessin, one of the most renowned of the ancient Welsh bards
Tauridor, or *toreador*, a Spanish bull-fighter, especially one who fights on horseback
Taymouth Castle, near the north end of Loch Tay in Perthshire, the seat of the Earl of Breadalbane
Teedling, humming
Teinds, tithes
Tester, sixpenny piece
"*The noble Mortimer*," etc. (p. 474), from *Henry IV.*, Part I. Act i. sc. 1
Threave, two dozen, or an indefinitely large number
Thrum bonnet, a cap made of waste yarn
Tieck, Johann Ludwig, one of the chiefs (1773–1853) of the Romantic School of Literature in Germany
Timmerman. Timmer (Danish, *tommer*) is Scottish for timber, wood
Tindis, horns of a stag
Tintadgel, or *Tintagel*, King Arthur's castle on the west coast of Cornwall
Toddis, or *tods*, foxes
Tongue-pad, keep (her) tongue trotting, going
Touchstone, the clown in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*
Toustie, testy, irascible
Train, the tail of a hawk
Traist servandis, trusty servants
Tre, wood
Trebuchet, a military engine for hurling stones and bolts
Tremor cordis, palpitations of the heart
Tres faciunt collegium, it takes three (monks) to make a college
Treshornish, more correctly *Treshinish*, a group of small islands off the west coast of Mull
Trew, to trow, think
Tristrem, Sir. See Sir Tristrem
Turnpike stairs, a winding or spiral staircase
Twelfth Day, Epiphany, the twelfth day after Christmas Day
Tyne, to lose

Uckelwyr, men of high stature, noble chiefs
Urie, Kaim og. See Kaim of Urie
Usquebaugh, whisky

Valet-de-place, one who acts temporarily as valet to a stranger staying in a town
Vaward, the van, front or early part
Viamos, caracco! presumably for *Veamos caracco*, let us see, old man
Vicarage, the smaller tithes
Vins extraordinaires, rare, uncommon wines
Virgil's shepherd (p. 333), an allusion to *Eclogues*, i. 28–30
Vis unita fortior, united strength is stronger
Vix ea nostra voco, declare this is hardly our own
Volenti non fit injuria, to him who is willing there is no injury done
Vortigern, the British prince who invited over Hengist and married his daughter Rowena

Wade, General, his military road. In the years 1720–1730 General Wade laid out and made several good roads through the Highlands as a means of pacification
Walker's, a tavern in Writers' Court, off the High Street, Edinburgh
Walladmor, by G. W. H. Häring, better known as Wilibald Alexis, a German novelist (1797–1870)
Wan, won, gained
Wanion, with a, mischief befall thee! with a malediction upon thee!
Water-purpie, common brook-lime, a species of *Veronica*
Wean, infant, little child
Weissenhorn, a small Bavarian town, about 10

miles south-east of Ulm on the Danube

Wheen, a few

Whilk, which

White cockade, the badge of the Stuarts and their adherents

Vilkie, Sir David, Scottish painter, a friend of Sir Walter Scott's

Windows, tax on, the forerunner of the inhabited house duty, was levied from 1795 to 1851

Wolf-burd, wolf-brood, *i.e.* wolf-cub

Wunna, will not

Yaud, a mare

Y Mac Y Mhor, the country of the Mackenzies of Seaforth, in the south-west of Ross-shire

Ywroken, wreaked, accomplished

Zimmermann, a German-Swiss writer, author of a celebrated book on *Solitude* (1755)

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